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STORIES BY AMERICAN AUTHORS.

VOLUME 3

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FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

Stories by American Authors

VOLUME III

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NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1900

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THE SPIDER'S EYE.

By Lucretia P. Hale.

THERE are whispering galleries, where, if the ear is placed in a certain position, it takes in the sound of the lowest whisper from the opposite side of the room. But, to produce this effect, the architecture of the apartment must be of a peculiar nature, and, especially, the rules and laws of sound must be observed.

I have often thought that, were one wise enough, there might be found, in every room, a centre to which all sound must converge. Nay, that perhaps such a focus had already been discovered by some one who has wished to appear wiser than his neighbors, who has made use of some hitherto unknown scientific fact, and has on any one occasion, or on many occasions, thus made himself the centre of information.

These ideas occurred to my mind when I arrived the other night early at the theatre, and was for a

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time, literally, the only occupant of the house. I fell to marvelling at the skill of the architect who has been so successful in the acoustic arrangements of this theatre. Not a sound, so it is said, is lost from the stage upon any part of the house. The lowest sob of a dying heroine, in her very last agony, is heard as plainly by the occupant of the back seat of the amphitheatre, as are the thundering denunciations of the tragic actor in the wildest of gladiatorial scenes.

I wondered if this were one of those rules that worked both ways; if the stage performer, in a moment of silent by-play, could hear the sentimental whisper of the belle in the box opposite, as well as the noisy applause of the claqueur in the front seat. If so, the audience might become, to him, the peopled stage, filled with the varied and incongruous characters.

Then if art can produce such effects upon what we call an ethereal substance—if the waves of air can be compelled to carry their message only in the directions in which it is taught to go—what influence would such power have on more spiritual media? In other worlds, where it is not necessary for thoughts to express themselves in words, but where some more subtle power than that of air conveys ideas from one being to another, it is possible that an inquiring being might place himself at some central point where he might gather in all the information that is afloat in such a spiritual existence.

Full of these thoughts, and my head, perhaps, a little bewildered by them, I passed unobserved into the orchestra, and ensconced myself in a little niche under the music-desk of the leader. I was surprised to find myself in a little cavity, from which there were loop-holes of observation into every part of the house, while there was a front view of the stage when the curtain should be raised. Seduced by the comfort of this little nook, and my speculations not being of the liveliest nature, it is not to be wondered at that I fell into a gentle sleep.

I was aroused presently by the baton of the leader, struck with some force upon the desk over my head. I was aware, at the same time, of a whispering all around my ears, and an incessant noise, like that of aspen leaves in a summer breeze, which, in spite of its softness and delicacy, overpowered the sound of the loud orchestra. When I was able to recover myself, I began to find that I had indeed placed myself in the centre of the house; not in the centre of sound, but, if I may so express myself, of sensation. I was not listening to the conversations, but suddenly found myself the confidant of the thoughts of all the occupants of this well-filled house. I was lost in the multiplicity of ideas that were poured in upon me, and endeavored to concentrate myself upon one series of thoughts. I looked through my loop holes, and presently selected one group towards which I might direct the opera-glass of my mental observation.

There sat the five Misses Seymour. We had always distinguished them as the tall one, the light haired one, the one who painted in oils, the one who had been south, and the little one whom nobody knew anything about. This individuality had been our only guide after having engaged Miss Seymour for a dance, and this was sufficient. The one who painted in oils always refused to dance; the one who had been south spoke with an accent, and said "*chick'n*" and "*jush*," if the conversation turned upon the bill of fare; and the others were distinguished by their personal appearance.

Now I felt anxious to discover more certainly which was which. I found, presently, that instead of contenting myself with the superficial layer of thought over my mind, created by the circumstances in which they were placed, I was penetrating into what they really were. A few minutes showed me what had been their occupations for the day, and what were their plans for the next. I saw, at once, all their regrets and ambitions.

It had been the day of Mrs. Jay's famous matinée. I had not been at the reception, but Frank Leslie had told me all about it, and that all the Seymours were there; and about Miss Seymour's fainting. I knew Frank was in love with one of the Miss Seymours, but I never had found out which, and I was not sure that Frank himself knew.

How suddenly did these five characters, whom before I had found it difficult to distinguish, stand out now with differing features. I saw Aurelia--

that was the tall one—enter the drawing-room very stately in her beauty. No wonder that every one had turned round to look at her; to admire her first, and then criticise her, because she seemed so cold and statue-like. But to-night she was going over the whole scene in her thoughts. I heard the throbbing of her heart as in memory she was bringing back the morning's events. She had refused to dance, because she was sure she should not have the strength to go through a polka. She had preferred to sink into a seat by the conservatory, and upheld by the excitement of the music to await the meeting.

Oh! in this everyday world, where its repeated succession of events is gone through with in composure, how easy it is to control the wildest passions. A conventional smile and a stiff bow are the draperies that veil the intensest unspoken emotions. It was under this disguise that Miss Seymour was to greet Gerald Lawson. He went to Canton three years ago, and before he went she had promised to marry him. She promised one gay evening after "the German." She had been carried away by the moment. Ever since, all through the three years, she had been regretting it. It was a secret engagement. The untold feeling that had prompted it had never been aired, and died very soon for want of earth and light. To cold indifference for the man to whom she had promised herself, had succeeded an absolute aversion. What was worse, she loved another person.

Aurelia Seymour loved Frank! This very morning the news had reached her that the Kumshan was in from Canton. The passengers had arrived last night; she was to meet Gerald at Mrs. Jay's this morning.

Frank Leslie seated himself by her. She was in the midst of a calm, cool conversation with him, when she saw a little commotion in the other corner of the room. Every one was greeting Mr. Lawson on his arriving home. He is making his way through the crowd; he comes to her, he bows; Aurelia smiles.

But this was not all. He asked her if she would come into the conservatory. She had accompanied him there. Half hid by the branches of a camellia-tree all covered with white blossoms, she had said coldly, "Gerald, I cannot marry you." But Gerald had not received the word so coolly. He had burst out into passion. First he had exclaimed in wonder, next he could not believe her.

"Would she treat him so ungenerously? Was she a heartless flirt, a mere coquette?"

He told over his love that had been growing warmer all these three years; of his ambition that was to be crowned by her approval; of his lately gained wealth, valued only for her sake. Passionate words they were, and full of intense feeling; but hidden by the camellia, restrained and kept under from fear of observers. They were frequently interrupted, too.

"Thank you—ninety-nine days; very quick pas-

sage. Yes, I go back next week ; no, I stay at home," were, with other sentences, thrown in, as answers to the different questions of those who did not know what they were interrupting.

But, at last, Aurelia broke away. Broke away ! No ; she accepted Middleton's proposal to go into the coffee-room, and left Gerald beneath the camellia.

As I watched her from my loop-holes I could tell that Aurelia was going over all this scene in her mind. While her eyes were fixed upon the stage, she recalled every word and gesture of Gerald's. Yet, his reproaches, his just complaints, hardly weighed upon her now. She was looking on the vacant seat beside her, and wondering when Frank would come to take it.

But "Lilly," the light-haired one, her thoughts were rushing back to the wild, gay polkas of the morning. Now by Aurelia's side, now away again ; she had danced continually till the last moment, and when they came to tell her the carriage was ready, and she must come away, she had fainted.

It was as she was going up stairs into the drawing-room, just before she and her sisters made their grand entrée, that Lilly had heard that "Cousin Joe" had not come home in the vessel with Gerald Lawson. He had gone to Europe by the overland route, and wild, mad fellow that he was, had determined to join the Russian troops in the Crimea.

"And be shot there for his pains," Frank Leslie added carelessly.

Cousin Joe hadn't come home! He didn't care to come home! He was going to be shot!

She could think of nothing else. She could not keep still; she could not talk placidly like the rest; she must dance, and dance wildly and passionately.

But a moment of reaction came. When the last strain of music had died away, all power of self-control had died away, too. No wonder that she had fainted! More wonder that she could recover herself; could resist her mother's entreaties, after all that dancing, to spare herself and stay from the opera.

Here she was, outwardly lively and radiant, chatting with Lieutenant Preston, inwardly chafed at all this constraint, and wondering how it was Cousin Joe could stay so long away.

By her side sat Annette. It was the report that she had been sent south last winter to break up a desperate flirtation she was carrying on. However it was, I had always fancied Annette more than either of the other sisters. She had apparently less of our northern reserve, whether for good or evil, than the rest. She said just what she was thinking; danced when she liked; was insolent when she pleased.

To-night she seemed to me fretful. She was angry with Lilly for talking with Lieutenant Preston; and, indeed, I must not, in honor, reveal all I

read in Annette's mind. If I found there her opinion of me ; if, on the whole, it lowered my opinion of myself, I must take refuge in the old proverb, "Eavesdroppers never hear any good of themselves."

But there was Angelina ; she was the one who "painted in oils," and she attracted me more than any of the others. There was about her an atmosphere of pleasure, within her an expression of delight, that accounted for the really sunny gleam upon her face. Something had made all the day happy for her. In the morning she had passed nearly all the time in Mrs. Jay's front drawing-room. The fine masterpieces of art, brought from Europe, make this apartment a true picture-gallery. But Angelina's pleasure, artist though she was, was not taken from the figures upon the walls. She walked up and down the room ; she lingered awhile in one of the deep fauteuils ; she paused before the paintings with Frank Leslie by her side. As she turned, at the theatre, now and then to the vacant seat behind her, next Aurelia's, her anticipation was not embittered by anxiety ; she knew he would come in time. Oh, Frank ! you did not tell me *all* that took place at Mrs. Jay's !

But, from all these observations, my thoughts were turned back to the stage by the influence of the little Sophie Seymour. She—about whom we knew nothing—she was the only one of the party entirely absorbed in the opera. Her eyes fixed

upon the stage ; her heart wrapt up in the intense story that was being enacted ; her musical soul throbbing with the glorious chords that swelled out ; her whole being reflected the opera.

So I turned me to the stage. My eyes fell first upon the substitute that the illness of Mademoiselle —— required for the night. Just now she was standing on one side, and as she drew her white glove closer, *her* thoughts were going back to the scenes of the day.

Oh ! what a little room she lived in ! She was sitting in it when the message came from the manager to summon her to sing to night ! Her brother Frank was copying some music by her side ; and now she is smiling at the recollection of the conversation that had followed upon her accepting the manager's unexpected proposal.

She had hastened to get out her last concert dress. It was new once—but oh ! would it answer now for the opera ?

Those very white kid gloves ! They had cost her her dinner.

"Must I have new ones, Franz ?" she had asked. "If there were only time to have an old pair cleaned—if, indeed, I have any left worth cleaning !"

"Never mind," answered Franz, "it is worth twenty dinners to have you hear the opera. I have longed so every night to have you there, and to have you on the stage ! my highest wishes are granted. Oh ! Marie, when you make a great

point, I shall have to take my flute from my mouth and cry bravo!"

"Oh, don't speak of the singing. It takes away my breath to think of myself upon the stage! How I waste my time over dress and gloves! I must practice; I must be ready for the rehearsal."

"My poor Marie! To-day, of all days, to go without dinner."

"Don't think of it! When the manager 'pays up,' oh, then, Franz! we'll have dinners. Only part of the money must go to a new concert dress. When my last was new, I overheard, as I left the stage, a young girl saying, to her sister, I suppose, 'What an elegant dress!' I wanted to stop and ask her if she thought it were worth going without meat for a month."

And as Marie recalled these words to-night to her mind, I saw her look up and smile as she glanced over the house, and contrasted the showy dress she wore with the poor home she had left behind.

What a poor home it was, indeed! What a contrast did the gay dress she arranged for the evening make with her room's poor adorning. The dress she thrust quickly away, and had devoted herself to the study of the music for evening. With her brother's assistance, she had prepared herself for the rehearsal, and had gone there with him.

The rehearsal was more alarming to her than the thought of the evening performance. There were

the conductor's criticising eyes glaring at her ; the unsympathizing glances of some of her stage companions—though many of them had come to her with words of kindly encouragement ; there was the silent, untenanted expanse of the theatre before her—none of the excitement of stage scenery, or the brilliancy of light and tinsel ; and she must force herself to think of her part, as a technical study of music, all the time she felt she was undergoing a severe criticism from Mademoiselle ——'s friends, who were comparing the newcomer's voice with that of their own ally.

But her thoughts were not sad. There was in her a gayety and strength of spirit that bore her up. The brilliant scene gave her an excitement that helped her to bear the thought of her everyday trials. It had been hard to work all day, preparing for the evening—hard for the mind and body—and she had lately lived on poor fare, and wanted the exercise upon which her physical constitution should support itself. At once these troubles were forgotten. Now was to come the duet with the prima donna.

No timidity restrained her now. She felt, at the moment, that her own voice was of worth only as it harmonized with the leading one. She forgot herself when she thought of that wonderful voice, when once she found her own mingled in its wonderful tones. Now she was supported by it through the whole piece ; her own was subdued by it, and at last she felt herself inspired by it ; it was

no longer herself singing; she was carried away by the power of another, and lifted above herself.

All applauded the magnificent music and harmony; the *bravo* of Franz was for Marie alone.

At this time my interest was absorbed in my observation of the prima donna. I had perceived at first how indifferently she had entered upon the spirit of the music. Her companion had filled her mind with the meaning of its composer, and was striving to infuse into herself the interpretation that the prima donna would give to its glorious strains.

But the soul of the prima donna was away. It was in a heavily-curtained room, where there were luxury and elegance. Here she had all day been watching by the bedside of her sick child. She had collected round it everything that money could bring to soothe its sufferings. There were flowers in the greatest profusion; these were trophies of her last night's success; and on the table by the bedside she had heaped up her brilliant, gorgeous jewels, for their varied and glowing colors had served to amuse the child for a few minutes. She had sung to him music, that crowds would have collected to hear, had they been allowed. Only to soothe him, all the golden tones of her voice had poured out—now dropping in thrilling, sad melody, now in glad, happy, childish strains.

Nothing through the day could put to rest that one appeal, which now was echoing in her ears: "Will nothing cool my throat!—my head burns!

—only a few drops of water!" Over all the tones of the orchestra these words sounded and thrilled so in her ears, that only mechanically could the prima donna repeat the tones that were thrilling all the hearts to which they came.

At last the power of her own voice conquered herself, too. In the closing cadences—in those chords, triumphant and faith-bringing—for the moment her own sorrows melted away, and the thought of herself was lost in the inspiration of the grand, majestic intonations to which she was giving utterance. She was no longer a suffering woman; but her soul and her voice were sounding beneath the touch of a great master-spirit, and giving out a glowing music, compelled by its master-power.

What an enthusiasm! what an excitement! As with the opera-singer on the stage, so with all the audience; all separate joy and grief, all individual passions were swallowed up, and carried away by this all-absorbing inspiration, and lost in its mighty whirl.

For me, now, there was but one character to follow. How grandly the stage-heroine went through her part! As if to crush all other emotion, she flung herself into the character she was portraying, and went through it wildly and passionately.

She overshadowed her little rival—for Marie was her rival, according to the plot of the opera—now threatening, now protecting her, as she was led on by the spirit of the play. Marie shrunk before her, or was inspired by her; and her delicate, en-

treating figure helped the pathos of her voice. Marie, by this time, had utterly lost herself in her admiration of the great genius who was so impressing her. She gave out her own voice as an offering to this great power. For its sake she would have found it impossible to make any mistake in her own singing, or do anything with her own voice, but just place it at the service of her companion, as a foil to her grand and glorious one.

When in the play the heroine gave up—as she does in the play—her own life for the sake of her rival, the act became more magnanimous and wondrous as being performed for this little delicate Marie, who shrank from so great a sacrifice.

The prima donna gained all the applause. Indeed, it was right—for it was her power that had called out all that was great in her delicate rival. It was she who had inspired her, and made her forget herself and everything but the notes she must give out, true and pure.

They were both called before the stage after the grand closing scene ; or rather the prima donna drew forward the retiring Marie. Shouts and peals of enthusiasm greeted the queen of song. But her moment of exaltation had passed away. Over and over again she was repeating to herself, "Will they never let me go home? Perhaps he is dying now—he wants me—I am too late !"

She was at the summit of her greatness ; but oh ! it was painful to see her there—to see how she would have hushed all those wild, enthusiastic

shouts for the sake of one fresh childish tone ; how she would have exchanged all those bursts of passion to make sure of a healthy throb in that child's pulse. All this enthusiasm was not new to her. It was part of her existence. It was a restraint upon her now, but she could not have done without it. It was the excitement which would serve to sustain her through another night of watching.

Marie, too, was giving her meed of praise, as she followed her across the stage. She did not think of taking to herself one shout of the enthusiasm, any more than she would have thought of appropriating one flower from the bouquets which were showered before her. There was, indeed, one share of the plaudits which belonged to her entirely. This came from Franz—for I recognized him by his unruly stamping, and unrestrained applause. His thoughts were only for Marie ; he was filled with pride at the manner in which she bore herself—at her simple carriage, and modest demeanor. His praise was all for Marie. The famous opera-singer, whom he had heard night after night, was forgotten, in his pride for his little sister.

I sank back into my niche. Varied figures floated before me, and bewildered me.

I have often looked at spiders with deep interest. It is said that their eyes are made up of many faces. What a bewildering world, then, is presented to their view ! It is no wonder that, as I have seen them, they have appeared so irresolute in their

motions, darting here and there. A world of so many faces stand around the spider, towards which shall he turn his attention? He lives, as it were, in the middle of a kaleidoscope, where many figures are repeated, and form one great figure, and each separate section is like its neighbor. Which of these varied yet too similar pictures shall he choose?

At least this is my idea of the sensations of a spider; but I am not enough of a naturalist to say that it is correct. How is it? When a fly enters that web, which is divided into a symmetry similar to that of the faces of a spider's eye, does mine host, the spider, see twenty-five thousand similar flies approaching, his organ of vision standing as the centre? What a cosmorama there is before him! What a luxurious repast might not his imagination offer him, if his memory did not recall the plain truth that dull reality has so often disclosed to him! We cannot wonder that the spider should lead, apparently, so solitary a life, since his eyes have the power of producing a whole ball-room from the form of one lady visitor. Not one, but twenty-five thousand Robert Bruces inspired the Scottish spider to that homely instance of perseverance, which served for an example for a king. As he hangs his drapery from one cornice to another, the prismatic scenes that come before him serve to lengthen that life which might seem to be cut off before its time. It is not one, but twenty-five thousand brooms which advance to destroy his

airy home; to invade his household gods, and bring to the ground that row of bluebottles which his magnifying power of vision has transformed from one to twenty-five thousand! nay, more, perhaps!

Out in the air, as he swings his delicate cordage from one tree to another, he does not need to wear a gorgeous plumage: this old dusty coat and uncomely figure, that make a child shrink and cry out, these may well be forgotten by him who looks into life through prismatic glasses. Every drop of rain wears for him its Iris drapery; the dew on the flowers becomes a jewelled circlet; and the dazzling pictures brought by the sunbeams outshine and transform for him his own dusky garment.

I thought of my friend, the spider, as into my web of thought came such numerous images. They were not alike in form — and so were more distracting. More than I can mention or number had visited me there; had excited my interest for a moment, and been crowded out by another new image. Yes, it was like looking into a kaleidoscope where there were infinite repetitions. In all were the same master-colors and forms. All were swayed by passions that made an under-current beneath a great outward calm. All were wearing an outward form that strove each to resemble the other; not to appear strange or odd. So they flitted before me, coming into shape, and departing from it as they came within and left my reach.

I only roused myself to see the various charac

ters, that had presented themselves on the stage of my mind, return again into their everyday costumes. They passed out of the focus of my observation into their several forms in which they walk through common life. Putting on their opera-cloaks, their paletots, they put on, for me, that mark that hides the inner life, and the veil that conceals all hidden passions.

It is said that there is, no longer, romance in real life. But the truth is that we live the romance that former ages told and sang. The magic carpet of the Arabian tales, the mirror that brought to view most distant objects, have come out of poetry, and present themselves in the prosaic form of steam locomotive and the electric telegraph.

Nowadays, everybody has travelled to some distant land, has seen, with everybody's eyes, the charmed isles and lotos shores that used to be only in books. In this lively, changing age everybody is living his own romance. And this is why the romance of story grows pale and is thrown aside. A domestic sketch of everyday life, of outward calm and simplicity, soothes the unrest of active life, and charms more than three volumes of wild incident that cannot equal the excitement that every reader is enacting in his own drama.

There were as many romances in life around me, that night, as there were persons in the theatre. I had not merely learned that the cold Aurelia was passionately in love, that the gay Lilly was broken-

hearted, that the frank Annette was silly, and Angelina and Frank engaged before it was out. Beside all this, I had learned the trials and joys of many others whom I know only in this way; and I left the theatre the last, as I had come in the first.

The next morning I returned to business affairs again. It was a particularly pressing morning. The steamer was in. I had not even time to think of my last night's experiences. Only at the corner of a street I met an acquaintance, whose smiling face amazed me. I knew that all last evening his mind had been preoccupied with the truly critical state of his affairs, and I was at a loss how to greet him. He hurried away from my embarrassment. I had more than one of these encounters; but it was not till the labors of the day were over that I understood how my knowledge of mankind had been lately increased. I went, in the evening, to a small party where I knew I should meet the Seymours. I fell in there with Aurelia first. She was as cold and as stately as ever. I entered into conversation with her, feeling that I could touch the key-note of her life. But no; she was as chilling to me as ever; nothing warmed her—nothing elicited from her the slightest spark. Sometimes she looked at me a little wonderingly, as if I were talking in some style unusual to me; as if my remarks were, in a manner, impertinent; but, in the end, I left her to her icy coldness.

As for Lilly, she appeared to the world, in general, as gay as ever. I fancied I detected a slight

listlessness as she accompanied her partner into the dancing-room for the sixth polka. It was no great help with me in talking to Annette, that I knew she was a fool. I won no thanks from Frank or Angelina when I manœuvred that they should have a little flirtation in the library. For some reason they were determined that their engagement should not be apparent, and I was reproached afterwards by Frank for my clumsiness, and received, in return, no confidences to make up for the reproach.

On the whole I passed a disagreeable evening. I had a feeling all the time that I was in the presence of smothered volcanoes, and a consciousness that I had the advantage of the rest of the world in knowing all its secret history. This became, at last, almost insupportable.

There was no opera this night. The next day it was announced that Mademoiselle —— would take her accustomed place in the performance. I went early to the theatre, and found, to my amazement, there had been some changes made in the orchestra ; the prompter's box had been enlarged, and my newly-discovered niche had been rendered inaccessible and almost entirely filled in ! In vain did I attempt to find some other position that might correspond to it. I only attracted the attention of the early comers to the theatre. I was obliged to return to my old position of an outside observer of life, and see, quite unoccupied, that centre of all observation which I had enjoyed my-

self so much two nights before; over which the leader of the orchestra was unconsciously waving his baton.

I made some inquiries for Marie. One day I went down the quiet, secluded street, where they told me she lived. I walked up and down before the house. It was very tantalizing to feel that I had no excuse for approaching her. Of all the figures that had assembled around me that night, hers had remained the most distinct upon my memory. For, through the whole, she had retained an outward bearing which had corresponded with what I could see of her inward self. Even when she threw herself most earnestly into her part, she had scarcely seemed to lose herself. She had always remained a simple, self-devoted girl.

I longed to see more of her. I wanted to see her in that quiet home. While I was wandering up and down, I abused the forms of society which would make my beginning an acquaintance with her so difficult. I saw Franz, brother Franz, the flute-player, leave the house. Scarcely conscious of what I was doing, I went, as soon as he had left the street, to the door which was open to all comers; to the house which contained more than one family. I made my way up stairs and knocked at a door to which Franz's card was attached.

It was opened by Marie. She stood before me with a handkerchief tied over her head, and a broom in her hand, but she looked, to me, as beautiful as she had done be[illegible]d the glare of the foot-

lights. Her simplicity was here even more fascinating.

She held the door partly open, while I, to recover myself, asked for Franz. She told me he was gone out, but would return soon, if I would wait for him. I was never less anxious to see any person than then to see Franz, but I could not resist entering the room, and this, in spite of the apologetic air of Marie. The room looked as neat as I had imagined it, seeing it from the mirror of Marie's mind. I should say it scarcely needed that broom which still remained expectantly in Marie's hand. A piano, spider-legged, in the number and thinness of these supports, stood at one side of the room, weighed down with classic-looking music. A bouquet, that had been given by the hand of the prima donna to Marie, stood upon the piano.

Otherwise it was a common enough looking room. Some remark being necessary, I inquired of Franz's health, and hoped he was not wearing himself out with hard work ; I had seen him regularly at the opera. Marie encouraged me with regard to her brother's health, and still, the opera even did not serve to open a conversation with Marie.

Then, indeed, did I wish that I was the hero of a novel. I might have told her I was writing an opera, and have asked her to study for its heroine. I might have retired, and sent her, directly and mysteriously, a gran. piano of the very grandest

scale. Or, I might have asked her to sit down to that old-fashioned instrument, and have asked her to let me hear her sing, for my nieces were in need of a new teacher. I might have engaged Franz, with promise of a high salary, to write me the music of songs, or a new sonata. But I had neither the salary nor the nieces. I had not even an excuse for standing there. It was very foolish of me, but I could not help feeling that it was exceedingly impertinent of me to be there.

Instead of informing Marie that I was intimately acquainted with her, that I had shared every emotion of her soul, on the exciting opera night, I stated that I could call again upon brother Franz. I regretted, at the same time, that I had not my card, and left the room with a courteous bow of dismissal from Marie.

I have walked that way very often. Once or twice I have seen Marie at the window, when she has not seen me. But I have not attempted to visit her again. Of what use is it for me, then, to have such a knowledge of her, when she does not have a similar one sympathetic with me? She has not sung in public of late, and I do not know the reason why she has not.

My friends are fond of asking me why I, every night, sit in a different place at the theatre; and why I have such a fancy for a seat in the midst of the trumpets of the orchestra, and directly under the leader. I am striving to make new acoustic discoveries.

But I dare not state in what theatre it is that my point of observation can be found, nor ask of the management to make an alteration in the position of the orchestra, lest some night I should be observed, and expose all the secrets of my breast to a less confidential observer.

A STORY OF THE LATIN QUARTER.

By Frances Hodgson Burnett.

"HE is one of the Americans," his fellow *locataires* said among themselves. "Poor and alone and in bad health. A queer fellow."

Having made this reply to those who questioned them, they were in the habit of dismissing the subject lightly. After all, it was nothing to them, since he had never joined their circle.

They were a gay, good-natured lot, and made a point of regarding life as airily as possible, and taking each day as it came with fantastic good cheer. The house—which stood in one of the shabbiest corners of the Latin Quarter—was full of them from floor to garret—artists, students, models, French, English, Americans, living all of them merrily, by no means the most regular of lives. But there were good friends among them; their world was their own, and they found plenty of

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sympathy in their loves and quarrels, their luck and ill-luck. Upon the whole there was more ill-luck than luck. Lucky men did not choose for their head-quarters such places as this rather dilapidated building,—they could afford to go elsewhere, to places where the Quarter was better, where the stairs were less rickety, the passages less dark, and the *concierge* not given to chronic intoxication. Here came the unlucky ones, whose ill-luck was of various orders and degrees : the young ones who were some day to paint pictures which would be seen in the Palais de l'Industrie and would be greeted with acclamations by an appreciative public ; the older ones who had painted pictures which had been seen at the Palais de l'Industrie and had not been appreciated at all ; the poets whose sonnets were of too subtle an order to reach the common herd ; the students who had lived beyond the means allowed them by their highly respectable families, and who were consequently somewhat off color in the eyes of the respectable families in question—these and others of the same class, all more or less poor, more or less out at elbows, and more or less in debt. And yet, as I have said, they lived gayly. They painted, and admired or criticised each other's pictures ; they lent and borrowed with equal freedom ; they bemoaned their wrongs loudly, and sang and laughed more loudly still as the mood seized them ; and any special ill-fortune befalling one of their number generally aroused a display of sympathy

which, though it might not last long, was always a source of consolation to the luckless one.

But the American, notwithstanding he had been in the house for months, had never become one of them. He had been seen in the early spring going up the stairway to his room, which was a mere garret on the sixth story, and it had been expected among them that in a day or so he would present himself for inspection. But this he did not do, and when he encountered any of their number in his out-goings or in-comings he returned their greetings gently in imperfect French. He spoke slowly and with difficulty, but there was no coldness in his voice or manners, and yet none got much further than the greeting.

He was a young fellow, scarcely of middle height, frail in figure, hollow-chested, and with a gentle face and soft, deeply set dark eyes. That he worked hard and lived barely it was easy enough to discover. Part of each day he spent in the various art galleries, and after his return from these visits he was seen no more until the following morning.

"Until the last ray of light disappears he is at his easel," said a young student whom a gay escapade had temporarily banished to the fifth floor. "I hear him move now and then and cough. He has a villainous cough."

"He is one of the enthusiasts," said another. "One can read it in his face. What fools they are —these enthusiasts! They throw away life that a crown of laurel may be laid upon their coffins."

In the summer some of them managed to leave Paris, and the rest had enough to do to organize their little excursions and make the best of the sunshine, shade and warmth. But when those who had been away returned and all settled down for the winter, they found the "American," as they called him, in his old place. He had not been away at all; he had worked as hard as ever through midsummer heat and autumn rain; he was frailer in figure, his clothes were more worn, his face was thinner and his eyes far too hollow and bright, but he did not look either discouraged or unhappy.

"How does he live?" exclaimed the *concierge* dramatically. "The good God knows! He eats nothing, he has no fire, he wears the clothing of midsummer — he paints—he paints — he paints! Perhaps that is enough for him. It would not be for me."

At this time—just as the winter entered with bleak winds and rains and falls of powdery snow—there presented herself among them an arrival whose appearance created a sensation.

One night on his way upstairs, the American found himself confronted on the fourth floor by a flood of light streaming through the open door of a before unoccupied room. It was a small room, meagerly furnished, but there was a fire in it and half a dozen people who laughed and talked at the top of their voices. Five of them were men he had seen before,—artists who lived in the house,—

but the sixth was a woman whom he had never seen and whose marvellous beauty held him spell-bound where he stood.

She was a woman of twenty-two or three, with an oval face whose fairness was the fairness of ivory. She was dark-eyed and low-browed, and as she leaned forward upon the table and looked up at the man who spoke to her, even the bright glow of the lamp, which burned directly before her face, showed no flaw in either tint or outline.

"Why should we ask the reason of your return?" said the man. "Let us rejoice that you are here."

"I will tell you the reason," she answered, without lowering her eyes. "I was tired."

"A good reason," was the reply.

She pushed her chair back and stood upright; her hands hung at her side; the men were all looking at her; she smiled down at them with fine irony.

"Who among you wishes to paint me?" she said. "I am again at your service, and I am not less handsome than I was."

Then there arose among them a little rapturous murmur, and somehow it broke the spell which had rested upon the man outside. He started, shivered slightly and turned away. He went up to the bare coldness of his own room and sat down, forgetting that it was either cold or bare. Suddenly, as he had looked at the woman's upturned face, a great longing had seized upon him.

"I should like to paint you—I," he found him-

self saying to the silence about him. "If *I* might paint you!"

He heard the next day who she was. The *concierge* was ready enough to give him more information than he had asked.

"Mademoiselle Natalie, Monsieur means," he said; "a handsome girl that; a celebrated model. They all know her. Her face has been the foundation of more than one great picture. There are not many like her. One model has this beauty—another that; but she, *mon Dieu*, she has all. A great creature, Mademoiselle."

Afterward, as the days went by, he found that she sat often to the other artists. Sometimes he saw her as she went to their rooms or came away; sometimes he caught a glimpse of her as he passed her open door, and each time there stirred afresh within him the longing he had felt at first. So it came about that one afternoon, as she came out of a studio in which she had been giving a sitting, she found waiting outside for her the thinly clad, frail figure of the American. He made an eager yet hesitant step forward, and began to speak awkwardly in French.

She stopped him.

"Speak English," she said, "I know it well."

"Thank you," he answered simply, "that is a great relief. My French is so bad. I am here to ask a great favor from you, and I am sure I could not ask it well in French."

"What is the favor?" she inquired, looking at him with some wonder.

He was a new type to her, with his quiet directness of speech and his gentle manner.

"I have heard that you are a professional model," he replied, "and I have wished very much to paint what—what I see in your face. I have wished it from the first hour I saw you. The desire haunts me. But I am a very poor man; I have almost nothing; I cannot pay you what the rest do. To-day I came to the desperate resolve that I would throw myself upon your mercy—that I would ask you to sit to me, and wait until better fortune comes."

She stood still a moment and gazed at him.

"Monsieur," she said at length, "are you so poor as that?"

He colored a little, but it was not as if with shame.

"Yes," he answered, "I am very poor. I have asked a great deal of you, have I not?"

She gave him still another long look.

"No," she said, "I will come to you to-morrow, if you will direct me to your room."

"It is on the sixth floor," he replied; "the highest of all. It is a bare little place."

"I will come," she said, and was turning away when he stopped her.

"I—I should like to tell you how grateful I am—" he began.

"There is no need," she responded with bitter lightness. "You will pay me some day—when you are a great artist." But when she reached the next

landing she glanced down and saw that he still stood beneath watching her.

The next day she kept her word and went to him. She found his room poorer and barer even than she had fancied it might be. The ceiling was low and slanting ; in one corner stood a narrow iron bedstead, in another a wooden table ; in the best light the small window gave his easel was placed with a chair before it.

When he had opened the door in answer to her summons, and she saw all this, she glanced quickly at his face to see if there was any shade of confusion upon it, but there was none. He appeared only rejoiced and eager.

"I felt sure it was you," he said.

"Were you then so sure that I would come?" she asked.

"You said you would," he answered. He placed her as he wished to paint her, and then sat down to his work. In a few moments he was completely absorbed in it. For a long time he did not speak at all. The utter silence which reigned—a silence which was not only a suspension of speech but a suspension of any other thought beyond his task—was a new experience to her. His cheek flushed, his eyes burned dark and bright ; it seemed as if he scarcely breathed. When he turned to look at her she was conscious each time of a sudden thrill of feeling. More than once he paused for several moments, brush and palette in hand, simply

watching her face. At one of these pauses she herself broke the silence.

"Why do you look at me so?" she asked. "You look at me as if—as if—" And she broke off with an uneasy little laugh.

He roused himself with a slight start and colored sensitively, passing his hand across his forehead.

"What I want to paint is not always in your face," he answered. "Sometimes I lose it, and then I must wait a little until—until I find it again. It is not only your face I want, it is yourself—yourself!" And he made a sudden unconscious gesture with his hands.

She tried to laugh again,—hard and lightly as before,—but failed.

"Myself!" she said. "*Mon Dieu!* Do not grasp at me, Monsieur. It will not pay you. Paint my flesh, my hair, my eyes,—they are good,—but do not paint *me*."

He looked troubled.

"I am afraid my saying that sounded stilted," he returned. "I explained myself poorly. It is not easy for me to explain myself well."

"I understood," she said; "and I have warned you."

They did not speak to each other again during the whole sitting except once, when he asked her if she was warm enough.

"I have a fire to-day," he said.

"Have you not always a fire?" she asked.

"No," he answered with a smile; "but when you come here there will always be one."

"Then," she said, "I will come often, that I may save you from death."

"Oh!" he replied, "it is easier than you think to forget that one is cold."

"Yes," she returned. "And it is easier than you think for one to die."

When she was going away, she made a movement toward the easel, but he stopped her.

"Not yet," he said. "Not just yet."

She drew back.

"I have never cared to look at myself before," she said. "I do not know why I should care now. Perhaps," with the laugh again, "it is that I wish to see what you will make of *me!*"

Afterward, as she sat over her little porcelain stove in her room below, she scarcely comprehended her own mood.

"He is not like the rest," she said. "He knows nothing of the world. He is one of the good. He cares only for his art. How simple, and kind, and pure! The little room is like a saint's cell." And then, suddenly, she flung her arms out wearily, with a heavy sigh. "Ah, *Dieu!*" she said, "how dull the day is! The skies are lead!"

A few days later she gave a sitting to an old artist whose name was Masson, and she found that he had heard of what had happened.

"And so you sit to the American," he said.

"Yes."

"Well—and you find him—?"

"I find him," she repeated after him. "Shall I tell you what I find him?"

"I shall listen with delight."

"I find him—a soul! You and I, my friend—and the rest of us—are bodies; he is a soul!"

The artist began to whistle softly as he painted.

"It is dangerous work," he said at length, "for women to play with souls."

"That is true," she answered, coldly.

The same day she went again to the room on the sixth floor. She again sat through an hour of silence in which the American painted eagerly, now and then stopping to regard her with searching eyes.

"But not as the rest regard me," she said to herself. "He forgets that it is a woman who sits here. He sees only what he would paint."

As time went by, this fact, which she always felt, was in itself a fascination.

In the chill, calm atmosphere of the place there was repose for her. She found nothing to resent, nothing to steel herself against, she need no longer think of herself at all. She had time to think of the man in whose presence she sat. From the first she had seen something touching in his slight stooping figure, thin young face and dark womanish eyes, and after she had heard the simple uneventful history of his life, she found them more touching still.

He was a New Englander, the last surviving representative of a frail and short-lived family. His parents had died young, leaving him quite alone, with a mere pittance to depend upon, and throughout his whole life he had cherished but one aim.

"When I was a child I used to dream of coming here," he said, "and as I grew older I worked and struggled for it. I knew I must gain my end some day, and the time came when it was gained."

"And this is the end?" she asked, glancing round at the poor place. "This is all of life you desire?"

He did not look up at her.

"It is all I have," he answered.

She wondered if he would not ask her some questions regarding herself, but he did not.

"He does not care to know," she thought sullenly. And then she told herself that he did know, and a mocking devil of a smile settled on her lips and was there when he turned toward her again.

But the time never came when his manner altered, when he was less candid and gentle, or less grateful for the favor she was bestowing upon him.

She scarcely knew how it was that she first began to know the sound of his foot upon the stairway and to listen for it. Her earliest consciousness of it was when once she awakened suddenly out of a dead sleep at night and found herself sitting upright with her hand upon her heavily throbbing heart.

"What is it?" she cried in a loud whisper. But

she spoke only to herself and the darkness. She knew what it was and did not lie down again until the footsteps had reached the top of the last flight and the door above had opened and closed.

The time arrived when there was scarcely a trifling incident in his every-day life which escaped her. She saw each sign of his poverty and physical weakness. He grew paler day by day. There were days when his step flagged as he went up and down the staircase; some mornings he did not go out at all. She discovered that each Sunday he went twice to the little American chapel in the Rue de Berri, and she had seen in his room a small Protestant Bible.

"You read that?" she asked him when she first saw it.

"Yes."

She leaned forward, her look curious, bewildered, even awed.

"And you believe in—God?"

"Yes."

She resumed her former position, but she did not remove her eyes from his face, and unconsciously she put her hand up to her swelling throat.

When at length the sitting was over and she left her chair he was standing before the easel. He turned to her and spoke hesitantly.

"Will you come and look at it?" he asked.

She went and stood where he bade her, and looked. He watched her anxiously while she did so. For the first moment there was amazement in

her face, then some mysterious emotion he could not comprehend—a dull red crept slowly over brow and cheek.

She turned upon him.

"Monsieur!" she cried, passionately. "You mock me! It is a bad picture."

He fell back a pace, staring at her and suddenly trembling with the shock.

"A bad picture!" he echoed. "*I* mock you—*I*?"

"It is my face," she said, pointing to it, "but you have made it what *I* am not! It is the face of a good woman—of a woman who might be a saint! Does not *that* mock me?"

He turned to it with a troubled, dreamy look.

"It is what I have seen in your face," he said in a soft, absent voice. "It is a truth to me. It is what *I* have seen."

"It is what no other has seen," she said. "I tell you it mocks me."

"It need not mock you," he answered. "I could not have painted it if I had not felt it. It is yourself—yourself."

"Myself?" she said. "Do you think, Monsieur, that the men who have painted me before would know it?"

She gave it another glance and a shrill laugh burst from her, but the next instant it broke off and ended in another sound. She fell upon her knees by the empty chair, her open hands flung outward, her sobs strangling her.

He stood quite near her, looking down.

"I have not thought of anything but my work," he said. "Why should I?"

The following Sunday night the artist Masson met in going down-stairs a closely veiled figure coming up. He knew it and spoke.

"What, Natalie?" he said. "You? One might fancy you had been to church."

"I have been," she returned in a cold voice,—"to the church of the Americans in the Rue de Berri."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Has it done you good?" he asked.

"No," she answered, and walked past him, leaving him to look after her and think the matter over.

She went to her own apartment and locked herself in. Having done so, she lighted every candle and lamp — flooding the place with a garish mockery of brightness. She sang as she did it—a gay, shrill air from some *opéra bouffe*. She tore off her dark veil and wrappings. Her eyes and cheeks flamed as if touched by some unholy fire. She moved with feverish rapidity here and there—dragging a rich dress from a trunk, and jewels and laces from their places of safe keeping, and began to attire herself in them. The simple black robe she had worn to the chapel lay on the floor. As she moved to and fro she set her feet upon it again and again, and as she felt it beneath her tread a harsh smile touched her lips.

"I shall not wear you again," she stopped her song once to say.

In half an hour she had made her toilette. She stood before her glass, a blaze of color and jewels. For a moment she sang no more. From one of the rooms below there floated up to her sounds of riotous merriment.

"*This* is myself," she said; "*this* is no other."

She opened her door and ran down the staircase swiftly and lightly. The founder of the feast whose sounds she had heard was a foolish young fellow who adored her madly. He was rich, and wicked, and simple. Because he had heard of her return he had taken an apartment in the house. She heard his voice above the voices of the rest.

In a moment she had flung open the door of the *salon* and stood upon the threshold.

At sight of her there arose a rapturous shout of delight.

"Natalie! Natalie! Welcome!"

But instantaneously it died away. One second she stood there, brilliant, smiling, defiant. The next, they saw that a mysterious change had seized upon her. She had become deathly white, and was waving them from her with a wild gesture.

"I am not coming," she cried, breathlessly. "No! No! No!"

And the next instant they could only gaze at each others' terror-stricken faces, at the place she had left vacant,—for she was gone.

She went up the stairs blindly and uncertainly.

When she reached the turn of the fourth floor where the staircase was bare and unlighted, she staggered and sank against the balustrades, her face upturned.

"I cannot go back," she whispered to the darkness and silence above. "Do you hear? I cannot! And it is you—you who restrain me!"

But there were no traces of her passion in her face when she went to the little studio the next day as usual. When the artist opened the door for her, it struck him that she was calm even to coldness.

Instead of sitting down, she went to the easel and stood before it.

"Monsieur," she said, "I have discovered where your mistake lies. You have tried to paint what you fancied must once have existed, though it exists no longer. That is your mistake. It has never existed at all. I remember no youth, no childhood. Life began for me as it will end. It was my fate that it should. I was born in the lowest quarter of Paris. I knew only poverty, brutality, and crime. My beauty simply raised me beyond their power. Where should I gain what you have insisted in bestowing upon me?"

He simply stood still and looked at her.

"God knows!" he answered at length. "I do not."

"God!" she returned with her bitter little laugh. "Yes—God!"

Then she went to her place, and said no more.

But the next Sunday she was at the American

chapel again, and the next, and the next. She could scarcely have told why herself. She did not believe the doctrines she heard preached, and she did not expect to be converted to belief in them. Often, as the service proceeded, a faint smile of derision curved her lips ; but from her seat in the obscure corner she had chosen she could see a thin, dark face and a stooping figure, and could lean back against the wall with a sense of repose.

"It is quiet here," was her thought. "One can be quiet, and that is much."

"What is the matter with her?" the men who knew her began to ask one another. But it was not easy for them to discover how the subtle change they saw had been wrought. They were used to her caprices and to occasional fits of sullenness, but they had never seen her in just such a mood as she was now. She would bear no jests from them, she would not join in their gayeties. Sometimes for days together she shut herself up in her room, and they did not see her at all.

The picture progressed but slowly. Sometimes the artist's hand so trembled with weakness that he could not proceed with his work. More than once Natalie saw the brush suddenly fall from his nerveless fingers. He was very weak in these days, and the spot of hectic red glowed brightly on his cheek.

"I am a poor fellow at best," he would say to her, "and now I am at my worst. I am afraid I shall be obliged to rest sooner than I fancied. I

wish first I could have finished my work. I must not leave it unfinished."

One morning when he had been obliged to give up painting, through a sudden fit of prostration, on following her to the door, he took her hand and held it a moment.

"I was awake all last night," he said. "Yesterday I saw a poor fellow who had fallen ill on the street, carried into the Hôtel Dieu, and the memory clung to me. I began to imagine how it would be if such a thing happened to me—what I should say when they asked for my friends,—how there would be none to send for. And at last, suddenly I thought of you. I said to myself, 'I would send for her, and I think she would come.'"

"Yes, Monsieur," she answered. "You might depend upon my coming."

"I am used to being alone," he went on; "but it seemed to me as I lay in the dark thinking it over, that to die alone would be a different matter. One would want some familiar face to look at—"

"Monsieur!" she burst forth. "You speak as if Death were always near you!"

"Do I?" he said. And he was silent for a few seconds, and looked down at her hand as he held it. Then he dropped it gently with a little sigh. "Good-bye," he said, and so they parted.

In the afternoon she sat to Masson.

"How much longer," he said to her in the course of the sitting,—"how much longer does he mean to live—this American? He has lasted

astonishingly. They are wonderful fellows, these weaklings who burn themselves out. One might fancy that the flame which finally destroys them, also kept them alive."

"Do you then think that he is so very ill?" she asked in a low voice.

"He will go out," he answered, "like a candle. Shall I tell you a secret?"

She made a gesture of assent.

"He starves! The *concierge* who has watched him says he does not buy food enough to keep body and soul together. But how is one to offer him anything? It is easy to see that he would not take it."

There was a moment of silence, in which he went on painting.

"The trouble is," he said at last, "that a man would not know how to approach him. It is only women who can do these things."

Until the sitting was over neither the one nor the other spoke again. When it was over and Natalie was on the point of leaving the room, Masson looked at her critically.

"You are pale," he remarked. "You are like a ghost."

"Is it not becoming?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Then why complain?"

She went to her own room and spent half an hour in collecting every valuable she owned. They were not many; she had always been recklessly

improvident. She put together in a package her few jewels, and even the laces she considered worth the most. Then she went out, and, taking a *fiacre* at the nearest corner, drove away.

She was absent two hours, and when she returned she stopped at the entrance, intending to ask the *concierge* a question. But the man himself spoke first. He was evidently greatly disturbed and not a little alarmed.

"Mademoiselle," he began, "the young man on the sixth floor—"

"What of him?" she demanded.

"He desires to see you. He went out in spite of my warnings. Figure to yourself on such a day, in such a state of health. He returned almost immediately, wearing the look of Death itself. He sank upon the first step of the staircase. When I rushed to his assistance he held to his lips a handkerchief stained with blood! We were compelled to carry him upstairs."

She stood a moment, feeling her throat and lips suddenly become dry and parched.

"And he asked—for me?" she said at last.

"When he would speak, Mademoiselle — yes. We do not know why. He said, in a very faint voice, 'She said she would come.'"

She went up the staircase slowly and mechanically, as one who moves in a dream. And yet when she reached the door of the studio she was obliged to wait for a few seconds before opening it. When she did open it she saw the attic seemed even more

cold and bare than usual ; that there was no fire ; that the American lay upon the bed, his eyes closed, the hectic spots faded from his cheeks. But when she approached and stood near him, he opened his eyes and looked at her with a faint smile.

"If—I play you—the poor trick of—dying," he said, "you will remember—that the picture—if you care for it—is yours."

After a while, the doctor, who had been sent for, arrived. Perhaps he had been in no great hurry when he had heard that his services were required by an artist who lay in a garret in the Latin Quarter. His visit was a short one. He asked a few questions, wrote a prescription, and went away. He looked at Natalie oftener than at the sick man. She followed him out on to the landing, and then he regarded her with greater interest than before.

"He is very ill?" she said.

"Yes," he answered. "He will die, of course, sooner or later."

"You speak calmly, Monsieur," she said.

"Such cases are an old story," he replied. "And—you are not his wife?"

"No."

"I thought not. Nevertheless, perhaps you will remain with him until—"

"As Monsieur says," she returned, "I will remain with him 'until—'"

When the sick man awoke from the sleep into

which he had fallen, a fire burned in the stove and a woman's figure was seated before it.

"You are here yet?" he said faintly. She rose and moved toward him.

"I am not going away," she answered, "if you will permit me to remain."

His eyes shone with pathetic brightness, and he put out his hand.

"You are very kind—to a poor—weak fellow," he whispered. "After all—it is a desolate thing—to lie awake through the night—in a place like this."

When the doctor returned the next morning, he appeared even a shade disconcerted. He had thought it quite likely that upon his second visit he might find a scant white sheet drawn over the narrow bed, and that it would not be necessary for him to remain or call again; but it appeared that his patient might require his attention yet a few days longer.

"You have not left him at all," he said to Natalie. "It is easy to see you did not sleep last night."

It was true that she had not slept. Through the night she had sat in the dim glow of the fire, scarcely stirring unless some slight sound of movement from the bed attracted her attention. During the first part of the night her charge had seemed to sleep; but as the hours wore on there had been no more rest for him, and then she had known that he lay with his eyes fixed upon her; she had felt their gaze even before she had turned to meet it.

Just before the dawn he became restless, and called her to his side.

"I owe you a heavy debt," he said drearily. "And I shall leave it unpaid. I wish—I wish it was finished."

"It?" she said.

"The picture," he answered, "the—picture."

Usually he was too weak for speech; but occasionally a fit of restlessness seized upon him, and then it seemed as if he was haunted continually by the memory of his unfinished work.

"It only needed a few touches," he said once. "One day of strength would complete it—if such a day would but come to me. I know the look so well now—I see it on you. face so often." And then he lay watching her, his eyes following her yearningly, as she moved to and fro.

In the studios below, the artists waited in vain for their model. They neither saw nor heard anything of her, and they knew her moods too well to be officiously inquisitive. So she was left alone to the task she had chosen, and was faithful to it to the end.

It was not so very long it lasted, though to her it seemed a life-time. A few weeks the doctor made his visits, and at last one afternoon, in going away, he beckoned her out of the room.

He spoke in an undertone.

"To-night you may watch closely," he said; "perhaps toward morning—but it will be very quiet."

It was very quiet. The day had been bitter cold, and as it drew to a close it became colder still, and a fierce wind rose and whistled about the old house, shaking the ill-fitting windows and doors. But the sick man did not seem to hear it. Toward midnight he fell into a deep and quiet sleep.

Before the fire Natalie sat waiting. Now and then a little shudder passed over her as if she could not resist the cold. And yet the fire in the stove was a bright one. She had smiled to herself as she had heaped the coal upon it, seeing that there was so little left.

"It will last until morning," she said, "and that will be long enough." Through all the nights during which she had watched she had never felt the room so still as it seemed now between the gusts and soughing of the wind. "Something is in the air which has not been in it before," she said.

About one o'clock she rose and replenished the fire, putting the last fragment of coal upon it, and then sat down to watch it again.

Its slow kindling and glowing into life fascinated her. It was not long before she could scarcely remove her eyes from it. She was trying to calculate—with a weird fancy in her mind—how long it would last, and whether it would die out suddenly or slowly.

As she cowered over it, if one of the men who admired her had entered he might well scarcely have known her. She was hollow-eyed, haggard and

pallid—for the time even her great beauty was gone. As he had left her that day, the doctor had said to himself discontentedly that after all, these wonderful faces last but a short time.

The fire caught at the coal, lighted fitful blazes among it, and crept over it in a dull red, which brightened into hot scarlet.

And the sick man lay sleeping, breathing faintly but lightly.

"It will last until dawn," she said,—"until dawn, and no longer."

When the first cinder dropped with a metallic sound, she started violently and laid her hand upon her breast, but after that she scarcely stirred.

The fitful blazes died down, the hot scarlet deepened to red again, the red grew dull, a gray film of ashes showed itself upon it, and then came the first faint gray of dawn, and she sat with beating heart saying to herself,

"It will go out soon — suddenly." And the dying man was awake, speaking to her.

"Come here," he said in a low, clear voice. "Come here."

She went to him and stood close by the bedside. The moment of her supreme anguish had come. But he showed no signs of pain or dread, only there was a little moisture upon his forehead and about his mouth.

His eyes shone large and bright in the snowy pallor of his face, and when he fixed them upon her she knew he would not move them away.

"I am glad—that it is—finished," he said. "It did not tire me to work—as I thought it would. I am glad—that it is—finished."

She fell upon her knees.

"That it is finished?" she said.

His smile grew brighter.

"The picture," he whispered—"the picture."

And then what she had waited for came. There was a moment of silence; the wind outside hushed itself, his lips parted, but no sound came from them, not even a fluttering breath; his eyes were still fixed upon her face, open, bright, smiling.

"I may speak now," she cried. "I may speak now—since you cannot hear. I love you! I love you!"

But there came to her ears only one sound—the little grating shudder of the fire as it fell together and was dead.

The next morning when they heard that "the American" had at last fulfilled their prophecies, the *locataires* showed a spasmodic warmth of interest They offered their services promptly, and said to each other that he must have been a good fellow, after all—that it was a pity they had not known him better. They even protested that he should not be made an object of charity—that among themselves they would do all that was necessary. But it appeared that their help was not needed—that there was in the background a friend who had done all, but whom nobody knew.

Hearing this they expressed their sympathy by going up by twos and threes to the little garret where there was now only icy coldness and silence.

Not a few among them were so far touched by the pathos they found in this as to shed a tear or so—most of them were volatile young Frenchmen who counted their sensibilities among their luxuries.

Toward evening there came two older than the rest, who had not been long in the house.

When they entered, a woman stood at the bed's head—a woman in black drapery, with a pale and haggard face which they saw only for a moment.

As they approached she moved away, and going to the window stood there with her back toward them, gazing out at the drifted snow upon the roof. The men stood uncovered, looking down.

"It is the face of an Immortal," said the elder of the two. "It is such men who die young."

And then they saw the easel in the shadow of the corner, and went and turned it from the wall. When they saw the picture resting upon it, there was a long silence. It was broken at last by the older man.

"It is some woman he has known and loved," he said. "He has painted her soul—and his own."

The figure near them stirred—the woman's hand

crept up to the window's side and clung to the wooden frame.

But she did not turn, and was standing so when the strangers moved away, opened the door and passed, with heads still uncovered, down the dark rickety stairs.

A fiercer cold had never frozen Paris than held it ice and snow bound through this day and the next. When the next came to its close all was over and the studios were quiet again—perhaps a little quieter for a few hours than was their wont.

Through this second day Natalie lived—slowly: through the first part of the morning in which people went heavily up and down the stairs; through the later hours when she heard them whispering among themselves upon the landings; through the hour when the footsteps that came down were heavier still, and slower, and impeded with some burden borne with care; through the moment when they rested with this burden upon the landing outside her very door, and inside she crouched against the panels—listening.

Then it was all done, and upon those upper floors there was no creature but herself.

She had lighted no fire and eaten nothing. She had neither food, fuel, nor money. All was gone.

"It is well," she said, "that I am not hungry, and that I would rather be colder than warmer."

She did not wish for warmth, even when night fell and brought more biting iciness. She sat by

her window in the dark until the moon rose, and though shudders shook her from head to foot, she made no effort to gain warmth. She heard but few sounds from below, but she waited until all was still before she left her place.

But at midnight perfect silence had settled upon the house, and she got up and left her room, leaving the key unturned in the lock. "To-morrow, or the day after, perhaps," she said, "they will wish to go in." Then she went up the stairs for the last time.

Since she had heard the heavy feet lumbering with their burden past her door, a singular calm had settled upon her. It was not apathy so much as a repose born of the knowledge that there was nothing more to bear—no future to be feared.

But when she opened the door of the little room this calmness was for a moment lost.

It was so cold, so still, so bare in the moonlight which streamed through the window and flooded it. There were left in it only two things—the narrow, vacant bed covered with its white sheet, and the easel on which the picture rested, gazing out at her from the canvas with serene, mysterious eyes.

She staggered forward and sank down before it, uttering a low, terrible cry.

"Do not reproach me!" she cried. "There is no longer need. Do you not see? This is my expiation!"

For a while there was dead silence again. She

crouched before the easel with bowed head and her face veiled upon her arms, making no stir or sound. But at length she rose again, numbly and stiffly. She stood up and glanced slowly about her—at the bareness, at the moonlight, at the narrow, white-draped bed.

"It will be—very cold," she whispered as she moved toward the door. "It will be—very cold."

And then the little room was empty, and the face upon the easel turned toward the entrance seemed to listen to her stealthily descending feet.

The next morning the two artists who had visited the dead man's room together, were walking —together again—upon the banks of the Seine, when they found themselves drawing near a crowd of men and women who were gathered at the water's edge.

"What has happened?" they asked, as they approached the group. "What has been found?"

A cheerful fellow in a blue blouse, standing with his hands in his pockets, answered.

"A woman. *Ma foi!* what a night to drown oneself in! Imagine the discomfort!"

The older man pushed his way into the centre, and a moment later uttered an exclamation.

"*Mon Dieu!*"

"What is it?" cried his companion.

His friend turned to him, breathlessly pointing to what lay upon the frozen earth.

"We asked each other who the original of the

picture was," he said. "We did not know. The face lies there. Look!"

For that which life had denied her, Death had given.

TWO PURSE-COMPANIONS.

By George Parsons Lathrop.

EVERYBODY in college who knew them at all was curious to see what would come of a friendship between two persons so opposite in tastes, habitudes and appearance as John Silverthorn and Bill Vibbard. John was a hard reader, and Bill a lazy one. John was thin and graceful, with something pensive yet free and vivid in his nature; Bill was robust, prosaic and conventional. There was an air of neglect and a prospective sense of worldly failure about Silverthorn, but you would at once have singled out Vibbard as being well cared for, and adapted to push his way. Their likes and dislikes even in the matter of amusement were dissimilar; and Vibbard was easy-going and popular, while Silverthorn was shy and had few acquaintances. Yet, as far as possible, they were always with each other; they roomed, worked, walked

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and lounged in company, and often made mutual concessions of taste so that they might avoid being separated. It was also discovered that though their allowances were unequal, they had put them together and paid all expenses out of a common purse. Their very differences made this alliance a great advantage in some respects, and it was rendered stronger by the fact that, however incompatible outwardly, they both agreed in acting with an earnest straightforwardness.

But perhaps I had better describe how I first saw them together. It was on a Saturday, when a good many men were always sure to be found disporting themselves on the ball-field. I used to exercise my own muscles by going to look at them, on these occasions; and on that particular day I came near being hit by a sudden ball, which was caught by an active, darting figure just in time to save my head from an awkward encounter. I nodded to my rescuer, and called out cordially, "Thank you!"

"All right," said he, in a glum tone meant to be good-naturedly modest. "Look out for your*self* next time."

It was Bill Vibbard, then in the latter part of his freshman year; and not far distant I discovered his comrade Silverthorn, watching Bill in silent admiration. They continued slowly on their way toward an oak grove, which then stood near the field. Silverthorn, a smaller figure than Vibbard, wore a suit of uniform tint, made of sleazy gray

stuff that somehow at once gave me the idea that it was taken out of one of his mother's discarded dresses. His face was nearly colorless without being pallid ; and the faint golden down on his cheeks and upper lip, instead of being disagreeably juvenile, really added to the pleasant dreaminess that hung like a haze over his mild young features. He was slender, he carried himself rather quaintly ; but his gait was buoyant and spirited. At that season the lilacs were in bloom, and Silverthorn held a glorious plume of the pale blossoms in his hand. What the first touch of fire is to the woods in autumn, the blooming of the lilac is to the new summer—a mystery, a beauty, too exquisite to last long intact ; evanescent as human breath, yet, like that, fraught with incalculable values. All this Silverthorn must have felt to the full, judging from the tender way in which he held the flowers, even while absorbed in talk with his friend. His fingers seemed conscious that they were touching the clue to a finer life. In Vibbard's warm, tough fist, the lilacs would have faded within ten minutes. Vibbard was stocky and muscular, and his feet went down at each step as if they never meant to come up again. He wore stylish clothes, kept his hands much in his coat pockets, affected high-colored neck-scarfs, and had a red face with blunt features. When he was excited, his face wore a fierce aspect ; when he felt friendly, it became almost foolishly sentimental ; as a general thing it was morosely inert.

Being in my senior year, I did not see much of either Vibbard or his friend ; but I sometimes occupied myself with attempts to analyze the sources of their intimacy. I remember stating to one of my young acquaintances that Vibbard probably had a secret longing to be feminine and ideal, and that Silverthorn felt himself at fault in masculine toughness and hardihood, so that each sought the companionship of the other, hoping to gain some of the qualities which he himself lacked ; and my young acquaintance offended me by replying, as if it had all been perfectly obvious, "Of course."

After I had been graduated, and had entered the Law School, Silverthorn and Vibbard came to my room one day, on a singular errand, which—though I did not guess it then—was to influence their lives for many a year afterward.

"Ferguson," began Bill, rather shyly, when they had seated themselves, "I suppose you know enough of law, by this time, to draw up a paper."

"Yes, I suppose so ; or draw it down, either," I replied. But I saw at once that my flippancy did not suit the occasion, for the two young fellows glanced at each other very seriously and seemed embarrassed. "What do you want me to do?" I asked.

Silverthorn now spoke, in his soft light inexperienced voice, which possessed a singular charm.

"It's all Bill's idea," said he, rather carelessly. "I would much rather have the understanding in words, but he—"

"Yes," broke in Bill, growing suddenly red and vehement, "I'm not going to have it a thing that can be forgotten. No one knows what might happen."

"Well, well," said I, "if I'm to help you, you'd better fire away and tell me what it is you're after."

"I will," returned Vibbard, with a touch of that fierceness which marked his resolute moods. "Thorny and I have agreed to stand by each other when we quit college. Men are always forming friendships in the beginning of life, and then getting dragged apart by circumstances, such as wide separation and different interests. We don't want this to happen, and so we've made a compact that whichever one of us, Thorny or me, shall be worth thirty thousand dollars first,—why that one is to give the other half. That is, unless the second one is already well enough off, so that to give him a full half would put him ahead of whichever has the thirty thousand. D' you see?"

"The idea is to keep even as long as we can, you know," said Silverthorn, turning from one of my books which he had begun to glance through, and looking into my eyes with a delighted, straightforward gaze.

"That's a very curious notion!" said I, revolving the plan with a caution born of legal readings. "Before we go on, would you mind telling me which one of you originated this scheme?"

I was facing Silverthorn as I spoke, but felt im-

pelled to turn quickly and include Vibbard in the question. They were both silent. It was plain, after a moment, that they really didn't know which one of them had first thought of this compact.

"Wasn't it you?" queried Silverthorn, musingly, of his comrade.

"I don't know," returned Vibbard; then, as if so much subtilty annoyed him: "What difference does it make, anyway? Can't you draw an agreement for us, Ferguson?"

But I was really so much interested in getting at their minds through this channel, that I couldn't comply at once.

"Now, you two fellows, you know," said I, laughing, "are younger than I, and I think it becomes me to know exactly what this thing means, before proceeding any further in it. How can I tell but one of you is trying to get an advantage over the other?"

The pair looked startled at this, but it was only, I found, because they were so astonished at having such a construction put upon their project.

"Don't be alarmed," I hastened to say. "I wasn't serious."

But Vibbard persisted in a dogged expression of gloom.

"It's always this way," he presently declared, in a heavy, provoked tone. "My father, you know, is a shrewd man, and everybody is forever accusing me of being mean and overreaching. But I never dreamed that it could be imputed in such a move as

—well, never mind!" he suddenly exclaimed in a loud voice, and with assumed indifference, getting up from his chair. "Of course it's all over now. I sha'n't do anything more about it, after what Ferguson has said." He was so sulky that he had to resort to thus putting me in the third person, although he was not addressing these words to Silverthorn. Then he gave his thick frame a slight shake, as if to get rid of the disagreeable feelings I had excited, and turned toward his friend. On the instant there came into his unmoved eyes and his matter-of-fact countenance a look of sentiment so incongruous as to be almost laughable. "I wish I could have done it, Thorny," said he, wistfully.

"Hold on, Vibbard," I interposed. "Don't be discouraged."

He paid no attention.

Upon this Silverthorn fired up.

"Hullo, Bill, this won't do! Do you suppose I'm going to let our pet arrangement drop that way and leave you to be so misconstrued? Come back here and sit down." (Vibbard was already at the door.) "As for *your* getting any advantage out of this, is it likely? Why, you are well off now, to begin with; that is, your father is; and I am poor, downright poor—Ferguson must have seen that."

Here was a surprise! The dreamy youth was proving himself much more sensible than the beefy and practical one. Vibbard, however, seemed to enjoy being admonished by Silverthorn, and re-

sumed his seat quite meekly. To me, in my balancing frame of mind, it occurred that one might go farther than Silverthorn had done, in saying that any advantage to Vibbard was very improbable; one might assume that it was surely Silverthorn who would reap the profit. But I decided not to disturb the already troubled waters any more.

Silverthorn, however, expressed this idea: "You'll be thinking," he said to me, with a smile, "that *I* am going to get the upper hand in this bargain; and I know there seems a greater chance of it. But then I have hopes—I—" The dreamy look, which I have described by the simile of a haze, gathered and increased on his fair ingenuous young face, and his eyes quite ignored me for a moment, being fixed on some imaginary outlook very entrancing to him, until he recalled his flagging voice, to add: "Well, I don't know that I can put it before you, but there are possibilities which may make a great difference in my fortunes within a few years."

I fancied that Vibbard gave me a quick, confidential glance, as much as to say, "Don't disturb that idea. Let him think so." But the next moment his features were as inert as ever.

It turned out, on inquiry, that only Vibbard was of age; his friend being quick in study, had entered college early, and nearly two years stood between him and his majority; so that, if their contract was to be binding, they would have to defer it for that length of time. I was prepared

for their disappointment; but Silverthorn, after an instant's reflection, seemed quite satisfied. As they were going, he hurried back, leaving his friend out of ear-shot, and explained himself,—

"You see, Vibbard has an idea that I shall never succeed in life,—financially, that is,—and so he wants to fasten this agreement on me, to prevent pride or anything making me back out, you know, by and by. But I like all the better to have it left just as it is for a while, so that if we should ever put it on paper he needn't feel that he had hurried into the thing too rashly."

"I understand," I replied; and I pressed his hand warmly, for his frankness and genuineness had pleased me.

When they were gone, I pondered several minutes on the novelty and boyish naïveté of the whole proceeding, and found myself a good deal refreshed by the sincerity of the two young fellows and their fine confidence in the perfectibility of the future. It seemed to me, the more I thought of it, that I could hold on to this scheme of theirs as a help to myself in retaining a healthy freshness of spirit. "At any rate," I said, "I won't allow myself to go adrift into cynicism as long as they keep faith with their ideal."

From time to time during the two years, I encountered the friends casually; and I remember having a fancy that their faces—which of course altered somewhat, as they matured—were acquiring a kind of likeness; or, rather, were *exchang-*

ing expressions. Silverthorn's grew rounder and brightened a degree in color; his glance had less momentum in it; he looked more commonplace and contented. On the other hand, Vibbard, through mental exertion (for he had lately been studying hard) and the society of his junior, had modified the inertia of his own expression. The strength of his features began to be mingled with gentleness. But this I recalled only at a later time.

Near the end of the two years' limit, when the boon companions were on the eve of taking their degrees, I found that another element had come into their affairs.

Going out one evening to visit a friend who lived at some distance on one of the large railroads, I had a glimpse of a small manufacturing place, which the train passed with great rapidity at late twilight. The large mill was already lighted up, and every window flashed as we sped by. But the sunset had not quite faded, and, from the colored sky far away behind the mill, light enough still came to show the narrow glen with its wall of autumn foliage on either side, the black and silent river above the dam, the sudden shining screen of falling water at the dam itself, and again a smooth dark current below, running toward us and under the railroad embankment. There was a small settlement of operatives' houses near the factory, and two or three larger homes were visible, snugly placed among the trees. We were swept away out

of sight in a moment ; but there was something so striking in that single glimpse, that a traveller in the next seat, who had not spoken to me before, turned and asked me what place it was. I did not know. I afterward learned that it was Stansby, a factory village perhaps forty miles from Cambridge. Finding that the memory of the spot clung to me, I wished to know more about it ; and one day in the following spring, when I needed a change from the city, I actually went out there. Stansby did not prove to be a very picturesque place ; yet its gentle hills, with outcroppings of cold granite, the deep-hued river between, and the cotton-mill near the railroad, somehow roused a decided interest which I never have been able wholly to account for. I enjoyed strolling about, but was beginning to think of a train back to Boston, when a turn of the road, a quarter of a mile from the mill, brought me face to face with a young girl who was approaching slowly with a book in her hand, which she read as she walked.

She was not a beautiful girl, and not at all what is understood by a "brilliant" girl ; yet at the very first look she excited my interest, as Stansby village itself had done. In every outline and motion she showed perfect health ; her clear color was tonic to the eye ; her deep brown hair, at the same time that it gave a restful look to her forehead, added something of fervency to her general aspect. In sympathy with the beautiful day, she had taken off her hat (which she carried on one

arm), disclosing a spray of fresh lilacs in her hair. She was very simply, though not poorly, dressed. All this, and more, I was able to observe without disturbing her absorption in her book ; but just as I was trying to decide whether the firm, compressed corners of her mouth only meant interest in the reading, or indicated some peculiar hardness of character, she glanced up and saw my eyes bent upon her.

Then, for an instant, there came into her own a look of eager search ; no softly inquiring gaze, such as would be natural to most women on a casual meeting of this sort, but a full, energetic, self-reliant scrutiny. I don't think the compression about her lips was softened by her surprise at seeing me ; but that keen level look from her eyes brought a wonderful change over her face, so that from being interesting it became attractive, and I was fired by a kind of enthusiasm in beholding it. Involuntarily I took off my hat, and paused at the side of the highway. She bent her head again,—perhaps with some acknowledgment of my bow, but not definitely for that purpose, because she continued reading as she passed me.

But now came the strangest part of the episode. This girl disappeared around the bend of the road, and after her two young fellows drew near whom I recognized as Vibbard and Silverthorn. It happened that Silverthorn, as on the very first day I had ever seen him, carried a sprig of lilac. Happened ? No ; the lilac in the girl's hair was too

strong a coincidence to be overlooked, and I was not long in guessing that there was some tender meaning in it.

"Hullo! Ferguson."

"Did you know we were here?"

These exclamations were made with some confusion, and Silverthorn blushed faintly.

"No," said I. "Do you come often?"

They looked at each other confidentially.

"We have, lately," Vibbard admitted.

"Then perhaps you can tell me who that girl is that I just passed."

"Oh, yes," said Silverthorn, at once. "That's Ida Winwood, the daughter of the superintendent here at the mills."

"She is a very striking girl," I said. "You know her, of course?"

"A little."

Vibbard enlarged upon this; it was a curious habit they had fallen into, of each waiting for the other to explain what should more properly have been explained by himself.

"Thorny's father, you know," said Vibbard, "was a great machinist, and so they had acquaintances around at mills in different parts of the State. She – that is Ida, you know—is only sixteen now, but Thorny first saw her when he was a boy and came here, once or twice, with his father."

Silverthorn nodded his head corroboratively.

"But it seems to me," I said, addressing him, "that you treat her rather distantly for an old

acquaintance; or else she treats *you* distantly. Which is it?"

They laughed, and Vibbard blurted out, with a queer, boyish grimace:

"It's *me*. She don't like me. Hey, Thorny?"

"It's nearer the truth," returned his friend, "to say that you're so bashful you don't give her half a chance to make known what she does think of you."

"Oh, time enough—time enough," said Vibbard, good-humoredly.

Remembering that I must hurry back to catch my train, I suddenly found that I had been in an abstracted mood, for I was still standing with my hat off.

"Well, let me know how you get on," I said, jocosely, as I parted from the comrades.

Yet for the life of me I could not tell which one of them it was that I should expect to hear from as a suitor for the girl's hand.

It was within a fortnight after this that they came to my office—for I had been admitted to the bar—and announced that the time for drawing up their long-pending agreement had arrived. They were still as eager as ever about it, and I very soon had the instrument made out, stating the mutual consideration, and duly signed and sealed.

Finding that they had been at Stansby again, I was prompted to ask them more about Ida.

"Do you know," I said, boldly, "that I am very much puzzled as to which of you was the more interested in her?"

They took it in good part, and Silverthorn answered :

"That's not surprising. I don't know, myself."

"I'm trying," said Vibbard, bluntly, "to make Thorny fall in love with her. But I can't seem to succeed."

"No," said his friend, "because I insist upon it that she's just the woman for *you*."

Vibbard turned to me with an expression of ridicule.

"Yes," he said, "Thorny is as much wrapped up in that idea as if his own happiness depended on my marrying her."

"You're rivals then, after a new fashion," was my comment. "Don't you see, though, how you are to settle it?"

"No."

"Why, each of you should propose in form, for the other. Then Miss Winwood would have to take the difficulty into her own hands."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Vibbard. "That's a good idea. But suppose she don't care for either of us?"

"Very well. I don't see that in that case she would be worse off than yourselves, for neither of you seems to care for her."

"Oh yes, we do!" exclaimed Silverthorn, instantly.

"Yes, we care a great deal," insisted Vibbard.

They both grew so very earnest over this that I didn't dare to continue the subject, and it was left in greater mystery than before.

At last the time of graduation came, and the two friends parted to pursue their separate ways. Silverthorn had a widowed mother living at a distance in the country, whose income had barely enabled her to send him through college on a meagre allowance. He went home to visit her for a few days, and then promptly took his place on a daily newspaper in Boston, where he spent six months of wretched failure. He had great hopes of achieving in a short time some prodigious triumph in writing, but at the end of this period he gave it all up, and decided to develop the mechanical genius which he thought he had perhaps inherited from his father. I began to have a suspicion when I learned that this new turn had led him to Stansby, where he procured a position as a sort of clerk to the superintendent, Winwood.

After some months, I went out to see him there. In the evening we went to the Winwoods', and I watched closely to discover any signs of a new relation between Silverthorn and the daughter. Mr. Winwood himself was a homely, perfectly commonplace man, whose face looked as if it had been stamped with a die which was to furnish a hundred duplicate physiognomies. Mrs. Winwood was a fat, woolly sort of woman, who knitted, and rocked in her rocking-chair, keeping time to her needles. A smell of tea and chops came from the adjoining room, where they had been having supper; and there was a big, hot-colored lithograph of Stansby Mills hung up over the fireplace, with one or two

awkward-looking engravings of famous men and their families on the remaining wall-spaces. Yet, even with these crude and barren surroundings, the girl Ida retained a peculiar and inspiring charm. She talked in a full, free tone of voice, and was very sensible; but in everything she said or did, there was a mixture, with the prosaic, of something so sweet and fresh, that I could not help thinking she was very remarkable. In particular, there was that strong, fine look from the eyes which had impressed me on my first casual meeting in the road. It had a transforming power, and seemed to speak of resolution, aspiration, or self-sacrifice. I noticed with what enthusiasm she glanced up at Silverthorn, when he was showing her some drawings of machinery, executed by himself, and was dilating upon certain improvements which he intended to make. Still, there was a reserve between them, and a timidity on his part, which showed that no engagement to marry had been made, as yet.

He was very silent as we walked together beside the dark river toward the railroad, after our call. But, when we came abreast of the dam, with its sudden burst of noise, and its continual hissing murmur, he stopped short, with a look of passion in his face.

"Things have changed since Vibbard went away," he said. "Yes, yes; very much. I used to think it was he who ought to love her."

"And you have found out—" I began.

He laid his hand quickly on my arm.

"Yes, I have found that it is I who love her—eternally, truly! But don't tell any one of this; it seems to me strange that I should speak of it, even to you. I cannot ask her to marry me yet. But there seems to be a relief in letting you know."

I was expressing my pleasure at being of any use to him, when the ominous sound of the approaching cars made itself heard, and I had to hurry off. But, all the way back to the city, I could think of nothing but Silverthorn's announcement; and suddenly there flashed upon me the secret and the danger of the whole situation. This girl, who had so much interested the two friends, in spite of their strong contrasts of character, was, perhaps, the only one in the world who could have pleased them both; for in her own person she seemed to display a mixture of elements, much the same and quite as decided as theirs. What, then, if Vibbard also should wake up to the knowledge of a love for her?

The next time I saw Silverthorn, which was a full year later, I said to him:

"Do you hear from Vibbard anything about that agreement to divide your gains?"

"No!" he replied, avoiding my eye; "nothing about that."

"Do you expect him to keep it?"

"Yes!" he said, glancing swiftly up again, with a gleam of friendly vindication in his eyes. "I know he will."

"But I hear hard things said of him," I persisted. "Reports have lately come to me as to some rather close, not to say sharp, bargains of his. He is successful; perhaps he is changing."

For the first time I saw Silverthorn angry.

"Never say a word of that sort to me again!" he cried, with a demeanor bordering on violence.

I was a little piqued, and inquired:

"Well, how do you get on toward being in a position to pay him?"

But I regretted my thrust. Silverthorn's face fell, and he could make no reply.

"Is there no prospect of success with those machines you were talking of last year?" I asked more kindly.

"No," said he, sadly. "I'm afraid not. I shall never succeed. It all depends on Vibbard, now. I cannot even marry, unless he gets enough to give me a start."

I left him with a dreary misgiving in my heart. What an unhappy outcome of their compact was this!

Meanwhile, Vibbard was thriving. After a brief sojourn with his father, who was a well-to-do hardware merchant in his own small inland city, he went to Virginia and began sheep-farming. In two years he had gained enough to find it feasible to return to New York, where he took up the business of a note-broker. People who knew him prophesied that he would prove too slow to be a successful man in early life; and, in fact, as he did

not look like a quick man, he was a long time in gaining the reputation of one. But his sagacious instincts moved all the more effectively for being masked, and he made some astonishing strokes. It began to seem as if other men around him who lost, were controlled by some deadly attraction which forced them to throw their success under Vibbard's feet. His car rolled on over them. Everything yielded him a pecuniary return.

As he was approaching his thirtieth birthday, he found himself worth a little over thirty thousand dollars—after deducting expenses, bad claims, and a large sum repaid to his father for the cost of his college course. He had been only six years in accumulating it. But how endlessly prolonged had those six years been for Silverthorn! When three of them had passed, he declared his love to Ida Winwood, though in such a way that she need neither refuse nor accept him at once; and a *quasi* engagement was made between them, having in view a probable share in Vibbard's fortunes. Once,—perhaps more than once,—Silverthorn bitterly reproached himself, in her presence, for trusting so entirely to another man's energies. But Ida put up her hands beseechingly, looking at him with a devoted faith.

"No, John!" she cried. "There is nothing wrong about it. If you were other than you are, I might not wish it to be so. But you,—you are different from other men; there is something finer about you, and you are not meant for battling

your way. But, when once you get this money, you will give all your time to inventing, or writing, and then people will find out what you are!"

There was something strange and pathetic in their relation to each other, now. Silverthorn seemed nervous and weary; he looked as if he were growing old, even with that soft yellow beard and his pale brown hair still unchanged (for he was only twenty-eight). His spirits were capricious; sometimes bounding high with hope, and, at others, utterly despondent. Ida, meantime, had reached a full development; she was twenty-two, fresh, strong, and self-reliant. When they were together, she had the air of caring for him as for an invalid.

Suddenly, one day, at the close of Vibbard's six years' absence, Silverthorn came running from the mill during working hours, and burst into the superintendent's cottage with an open letter in his hand, calling aloud for Ida.

"He is coming! He is coming!" cried he, breathless, but with a harsh excitement, as if he had been flying from an angry pursuer.

"Who? What has happened?" returned Ida, in alarm.

"Vibbard."

But he looked so wild and distraught, that Ida could not understand.

"Vibbard?" she repeated. Then, — with an amazed apprehension which came swiftly upon her,—shutting both hands tight as if to strengthen

herself, and bringing them close together over her bosom : "Have you quarreled with him?"

"Quarreled?" echoed Silverthorn, looking back her amazement. "Why, do you suppose the world has come to an end? Don't you know we would sooner die than quarrel?"

"Vibbard — coming!" repeated Ida, as she caught sight of the letter. "Yes ; now, I see."

"But, doesn't it make you happy?" asked her lover, suddenly annoyed at her cool reception of the news.

"I don't know," she answered, pensively. "You have startled me so. Besides,—why should it make me happy?" A singular confusion seemed to have come over her mind. "Of course," she added, after a moment, "I am happy, because he's your friend."

"But,—the money, Ida!" He took her hand, but received no answering pressure. "The money,—think of it! We shall be able—" Then catching sight of an expression on her features that was almost cruel in its chill absence of sympathy, Silverthorn dropped her hand in a pet, and walked quickly out of the house back to the mill.

She did not follow him. It was their first misunderstanding.

Silverthorn remained at his desk, went to his own boarding-house for dinner, and returned to the mill, but always with a sense of unbroken suffering. What had happened? Why had Ida been so unresponsive? Why had he felt angry

with her? These questions repeated themselves incessantly, and were lost again in a chaotic humming that seemed to fill his ears and to shut out the usual sounds of the day, making him feel as if thrust away into a cell by himself, at the same time that he was moving about among other people.

Vibbard was to arrive that afternoon. Silverthorn wished he had told Ida, before leaving her, how soon his friend was coming. As no particular hour had been named in the letter, he grew intolerably restless, and finally told Winwood that he was going to the dépôt, to wait.

All this time Ida had been nearly as wretched as he; and, unable to make out why this cloud had come over them just when they ought to have been happiest, she, too, went out into the air for relief, and wandered along the hill-side by the river.

It was early summer again. The lilacs were in bloom. All along the fence in front of Winwood's house were vigorous bushes in full flower. Ida, as she passed out, broke off a spray and put it in her hair, wishing that its faint perfume might be a spell to bring Silverthorn back.

On the edge of the wood where she had been idly pacing for a few minutes, all at once she heard a crackling of twigs and dry leaves under somebody's active tread, just behind her. It did not sound like her lover's step. She looked around. The man, a stranger with strong features and thick beard, halted at once and looked at her—silently,

as if he had forgotten to speak, but with a degree of homage that dispelled everything like alarm.

She stood still, looking at him as earnestly as he at her. Then, she hardly knew how, a conviction came to her.

"Mr. Vibbard?" she said, in a low inquiring tone. To herself she whispered, "Six years!"

Somehow, although she expected it, there was something terrible in having this silent, strange man respond:

"Yes."

He spoke very gently, and put out his hand to her.

She laid her own in his strong grasp, and then instantly felt as if she had done something wrong. But he would not let it go again. Drawing her a little toward him, he turned so that they could walk together back to the mills.

"Did John send you this way? Have you seen him?" she asked, falteringly.

"No," said Vibbard. "From where I happened to be, I thought I could get here sooner by walking over through Bartlett. Besides, it was pleasanter to come my own way instead of by railroad."

"But how did you know me?"

"I have never forgotten how you looked. And besides, that lilac."

With a troubled impulse, Ida drew her hand away from his, and snatched the blossoms out of her hair, meaning to throw them away. Then she hesitated, seeing her rudeness. Vibbard, who had

not understood the movement, said with a tone of delight :

"Won't you give them to me? Do you remember how you wore them in your hair one day, years ago?"

"I have reasons for not forgetting it," she answered with a laugh, feeling more at her ease. "Well, I have spoiled this bunch now, but of course you may have them."

He took the flowers, and they walked on, talking more like old friends. At the moment when this happened, Silverthorn, who, while waiting for another train to arrive, had come back to the house in search of Ida, passed on into a little orchard on a slope, just beyond, which overlooked a bend in the road : from there he saw Ida give Vibbard the lilac spray. At first he scarcely knew his old friend, and the sight struck him with a jealous pang he had never felt before. Then suddenly he saw that it was Vibbard, and would have rushed down the slope to welcome him. But like a detaining hand upon him, the remembrance of his foolish quarrel with Ida held him back. He slunk away secretly through the orchard, into the woods, and hurried to meet Vibbard at a point below the house, where Ida would have left him.

He was not disappointed. He gained the spot in time, and appeared to be walking up from the mill, when he encountered his old comrade going sturdily toward it. Nevertheless, he felt uncomfortable at the deception he was using. They

greeted each other warmly, yet each felt a constraint that surprised him.

Vibbard explained how he had come.

"And I have seen Ida," he exclaimed impetuously, with a glow of pleasure. Then he stopped in embarrassment. "Are you going back that way?" he asked.

"No," said the other, gloomily. "We'll go over the river to where I live."

They took the path in that direction, and on the way Vibbard began explaining how he had arranged his property.

"It's just as well not to go up to the Winwoods' until we've finished this," he said, parenthetically. "And to tell you the truth, Thorny, it's a queer business for me to be about, after I've been hard at work for so long, scraping together what I've got. I shouldn't much like people to know about it, I can tell you; and I never would do it for any man but you."

Formerly, Silverthorn had been used to this sort of bluntness, but now it irritated him.

"Do you mean to say," he asked, "that you would break your bargain, if it had been made with any one besides me?"

Vibbard drew himself up proudly.

"No, sir!" he declared, in a cold tone. "I keep my word whenever I have given it."

Silverthorn uttered an oath under his breath.

"If you mean to keep your word, why don't you do it without blustering? Suppose I *have* been

unfortunate enough to come out behind in the race, and to need this money of yours? Is that any reason why you should grind into me like a file the sense of my obligation to you?"

"Come, Thorny," said his friend, "you are treating me like a stranger. How long is it since you got these high-strung notions?"

"I suppose I've been growing sensitive since I first perceived that I was dependent on your fortune. It has unmanned me. I believe I might have done something, but for this."

"Gad, so might I be doing something, now, if I had my whole capital," muttered Vibbard.

He did not see how his remark renewed the wound he had just been trying to heal. For several years he had felt that the compact with his friend was a useless clog on himself, and this had probably caused him to dwell too much on his own generosity in making it.

Both felt pained and dissatisfied with their meeting. It was full of sordidness and discomfort; it seemed in one hour to have stripped from their lives the romance of youth. But after their little tiff they tried to recover their spirits and succeeded in keeping up a sham kind of gayety. Arrived at Silverthorn's lodging, they completed their business; Vibbard handing over a check, and receiving in exchange Silverthorn's copy of the agreement with a receipt in due form.

"How long can you stay, Bill?" asked Silverthorn, more cheerfully, when this was over. A sup

pressed elation at his good luck made him tingle from top to toe; and, to tell the truth, he did not feel much interest in Vibbard's remaining.

"I must be off to-morrow," said his friend. "I suppose I can stay here to-night?"

"Of course."

"I must call on Ida, before I go."

Silverthorn's brow darkened.

"Ah, Thorny," continued Vibbard, unconsciously, "it's queer to look back to that time when we were trying to persuade each other to make love to her! Do you know that since I've been away, she's never once gone out of my mind?"

"Is that so?" returned his comrade, with a strained and cloudy effort to appear lightly interested.

"Yes," said the other, warming to his theme. "It may seem strange in a rough business man like me,—and I guess it would have played the Old Harry with anybody whose head wasn't perfectly level,—but that strong, pure, sweet face of hers has come between me and many a sharp fellow I've had to deal with. But it never distracted my thoughts; it helped me. The memory of her was with me night and day, Thorny, and it made me a hard, successful worker, and kept me a pure-hearted, happy man. You'll see that I don't need much persuasion to speak to her now!"

While Vibbard was talking, Silverthorn had risen, as if interested, and now stood with his arm

stretched on the cheap, painted wooden mantelpiece above the empty grate of his meagre room. Vibbard noticed that he looked pale; and it suddenly struck him that his friend might have suffered from poverty, and that his health was perhaps weakening. A gush of the old-time love suddenly came up from his heart, though he said nothing.

"You know I always told you," Silverthorn began,—he paused and waited an instant,—"I always told you she was the woman for you."

"Indeed I know it, old boy," said Vibbard, heartily.

He rose, came to his old college-mate and took hold of his disengaged arm with both hands, affectionately.

"Look here," he added; "there's been something queer and dismal about seeing each other, after such a long interval,—something awkward about this settlement between us. If I've done anything to hurt your feelings, Thorny, I'm sorry. Let's make an end of the trouble here and now, and be to each other just as we used to be. What do you say?"

"I say you're a good, true-hearted fellow, as you always were, and I want you to promise that we shall keep up our old feeling forever."

"There's no need of any promise but this," said Vibbard, as they clasped hands.

"Now, tell me one thing," resumed Silverthorn; "did it never occur to you, in all these six

years, that I, who have been living in the daily company of the girl you love, might cross your prospect?"

For a second or two Vibbard's eyelids, which fell powerless while he listened, remained shut, and a shock of pain seemed to strike downward from the brain, across his face and through his whole stalwart frame.

"It's your turn to hurt me," he said, slowly, as he looked at his friend again. "Have you any idea how that bare suggestion cut into me?"

"I think I have," said Silverthorn, mechanically. He remained very pale. "But I see, from the way it struck you, that you had never thought of it before. That relieves me. Give me your hand once more, Bill." Then he explained, hurriedly, that he must go to the mill for a few moments. "If I'm not back to tea, don't wait. The girl will come up and give it to you. And mind you don't go over to the Winwoods'" (this with a laugh); "I wish to give them a little warning of your visit."

In a moment he was gone. Vibbard amused himself as well as he could with the books and drawings in the room; then he sat down, looked all about the place, and sighed:

"Poor fellow! he can be more comfortable now."

Before long the tea hour came. Thorny had not returned, and he took the meal alone, watching the sunset out of the window. But by and by he

grew restless, and finally, taking his hat and his cane, which had an odd-shaped handle made of two carved snakes at once embracing and wounding one another, he went out and strolled across the bridge toward the Winwoods'. By the time he reached there dusk had closed in, though the horizon afar off was overhung by a faint, stirring light from the rising moon. He remembered Silverthorn's injunction, however, and would not go into the cottage.

He passed the lilac-hedge, with its half-pathetic exhalations of delicious odor recalling the past, and was prompted to step through a break in the stone wall and ascend the orchard slope.

He stood there a few minutes enjoying the hush of nightfall and exulting in the full tide of happiness and sweet anticipation that streamed silently through his veins. All about him stole up the soft and secret perfumes of the summer's dusk,—perfumes that feel their way through the air like the monitions of early love, going out from one soul to another.

Suddenly, a side-door in the house below was opened, and two figures came forth as if borne upon the flood of genial light that poured itself over the greensward.

They were Silverthorn and Ida.

How graceful they looked, moving together,—the buoyant, beautiful maiden and the slender-shaped young man, who even at a distance impressed one with something ideal in his pose and

motion! Vibbard looked at them with a bewildered, shadowy sort of pleasure; but all at once he saw that Silverthorn held Ida's hand in his and had laid his other hand on her shoulder. A frightful tumult of feeling assailed him. The small, carved serpents on his stick seemed suddenly to drive their fangs into his own palm, as he clutched the handle tighter.

For an instant he hesitated and hoped. Then the pair, passing along below the broken wall, came within earshot, and he heard his old boon comrade saying, in a pleading voice:

"But you have never quite promised me, Ida! You have never fully engaged yourself to me."

Partly from a feeling of strangulation, partly with a blind impulse to do something violent, Vibbard clutched himself about the throat, tore furiously at his collar till it gave way, and, in a paroxysm little short of madness, he turned and fled—he did not know where nor how—through the darkness.

It seemed to him for a long time as if he was marching and reeling on through the woods, stumbling over roots and fallen trunks, breaking out into open fields upon the full run, then pursuing a road, or rambling hopelessly down by the ebon-hued river,—and as if he was doing all this with some great and urgent purpose of rescuing somebody from a terrible fate. He must go on foot,—there was no other way,—and everything depended on his getting to a certain point by a certain time.

The worst of it was, he did not know where it was that he must go to! Then, all at once, he became aware that he had made a mistake. It was not some one else who was to be saved. It was *himself*. He must rescue himself—

From what?

At this, he came to a pause and tried to think. He stood on a commanding spot, somewhere not far from Stansby, though he could not identify it. The moon was up, and the wide, leafy landscape was spread out in utter silence for miles around him. For a brief space, while collecting his thoughts, he saw everything as it was. Then, as if at the stroke of a wand, horrible deformity appeared to fall upon the whole scene; the thousand trees below him writhed as if in multitudinous agony; and, where the thick moonlight touched house or road, or left patches of white on river and pool, there the earth seemed smitten as with leprosy. Silverthorn, reaching his room in an hour after Vibbard had left it, was not at first surprised at his absence. Afterward he grew anxious; he went out, ran all the way to Winwood's house, and came back, hoping to find that his friend had returned while he was searching for him. He sat down and waited; he kept awake very late; his head grew heavy, and he fell asleep in his chair, dreaming with a dull sense of pain, and also of excitement, about his new access of comparative wealth.

A heavy step and the turning of the door-knob

awoke him. Moonlight came in at the window—pale, for the dawn was breaking—and his lamp still flickered on the table. Streaked with these conflicting glimmers, Vibbard stood before him,—his clothes torn, his hat gone, his face pale and fierce.

"What have you been doing?" asked Silverthorn wearily, and without surprise, for he was too much dazed.

"You — *you!*" said Vibbard, hoarsely, pointing sharply at him, as if his livid gaze was not enough. "You have been taking her from me!"

"Ida?" queried Silverthorn, with what seemed to the other to be a laughing sneer.

"Are you shameless?" demanded Vibbard. "Why don't you lie down there and ask me to forgive you for demanding so little? I've no doubt you are sorry that you couldn't get the whole of my money! But I suppose you were afraid you wouldn't receive even the half, if you told me beforehand what you meant to do."

Silverthorn was numb from sleeping in a cramped posture and without covering; but a deeper chill shook him at these words. He tried to get up, but felt too weak, and had to abandon it. He shivered heavily. Then he put his hand carefully into the breast of his coat, and after a moment drew out his pocket-book.

"Here it is," said he, very quietly. "I came home intending to give you back your money, but you were not here."

"You expect me to believe that?" retorted

Vibbard, scornfully, "when I know that you went from here after receiving the check, and—ah! I couldn't have believed it, if I hadn't heard—"

"You overheard us, then? You came, though I warned you not to? And what did you hear?" Silverthorn's lips certainly curled with contempt now.

Vibbard answered: "I heard you pleading with Ida to promise herself to you."

"That's a lie," said Silverthorn, calmly.

"Didn't you say to her, 'You have never yet fully engaged yourself to me?' Weren't you pleading?"

"Yes. I was begging that she would forget all the words of love I had ever spoken, and listen to you when you should come to tell her your story."

Vibbard's head bowed itself in humiliation and wonder. He came forward two or three steps, and sank into a chair.

"Is this possible?" he inquired, at last.

"And you, too, had loved her!"

Silverthorn vouchsafed no reply.

Vibbard, struggling with remorse, uncertainty, and a dimly returning hope, brought himself to speak once more, hesitatingly.

"What did she say?"

"At first she would not tolerate my proposal. I saw there was a conflict in her mind. Something warned me what it was, yet I could not help fancying that she might really be unwilling to give me up. So then I said I had made up my mind any

way, as things stood, to return you your money. I—forgive me, Bill, but it was not treachery to you—only justice to all—I asked her if she would wish to marry me as I was, poor and without a future."

"And she—" asked Vibbard, trembling. "What did she say?"

Silverthorn let the pocket-book fall, and buried his face in his hands. It was answer enough for his friend.

Vibbard came over and knelt beside him, and tried to rouse him. He stroked his pale brown hair, and called him repeatedly "Dear old boy."

"Poor Thorny, I wish I could do something for you," he said, gently. "Are you sure you understood her?"

The other suddenly looked up.

"Don't blame her, Bill," he said, beseechingly. "Don't let it hurt your love for her. There was nothing mercenary. She hesitated a moment—and then I saw that it had all been a dream of the impossible. I had always associated this money with myself. It turned back the whole current of her ideas, and upset everything, when I separated myself from it. All the plans of going away—all that life I had talked of—had to be scattered to the winds in a moment. She did not love me enough, for myself alone!"

"Poor Thorny!" again murmured his friend.

Love, amid all its other resemblances, is like the

spirit of battle. It fires men to press on toward the goal, even though a brother by their side, pushing in the same direction, should fall with a mortal wound. And the fighter goes on, to wed with victory, while his brother lies dead far behind cheated of his bride.

Vibbard offered himself to Ida the next day. It was a strange and distressful wooing; but she could not deny that, in a way unknown to herself till now, she had loved Vibbard from the beginning, more than his friend. In her semi-engagement with Silverthorn, she had probably been loving Vibbard through his friend. But when the strong man, who had gained a place in the world for her sake, returned and placed his heart before her, she could no longer make a mistake.

Silverthorn would not keep the money, neither could his friend persuade him to come and take a share in his business. He would not leave Stansby. Where he had first seen Ida, there he resolved to dwell, with the memory of her.

When I saw him again, and he told me of this crisis, he said:

"I am not 'poor Thorny,' as Vibbard called me; for now I have a friendship that will last me through life. It has stood the test of money, and hate, and love, and it is stronger than them all."

POOR OGLA-MOGA.

By David D. Lloyd.

I.

IT was a great day when Miss Slopham, so many years conspicuous in our best society, discovered the North American Indian—not for the Indian, perhaps, but certainly for Miss Slopham. Envious and slanderous tongues said that Miss Slopham was afflicted with an ambition. She wanted a mission—not a foreign mission, in any sense of the words. She was debarred from one kind by her sex, and the other involved the possibility of crocodiles and yellow fever, not to mention the chance of being sacrificed to some ugly heathen god. She could not paint, or write, or sing. The stage had never offered any attractions to her, for various reasons, one of which was, so said the same untrustworthy authority, that she had never offered any attractions to the stage. She

*** *Harper's Magazine, April,* 1882.

was tall and spare, and of a dry and autumnal aspect. She wanted fame, but she wanted it respectable. Therefore it was, said gossip, that this excellent woman turned to philanthropy. Even here her fate was against her. If she had not been a woman, she would have mourned the ill-luck that brought her into the world rather late for the anti-slavery agitation. The malicious rumor, by-the-way, which declared that she wore a bib and tucker at the time of Jackson's war with the United States Bank, was wickedly false. Miss Slopham tried tenement-house reform, but fled before the smells. She had a little practice in the hospitals and orphan asylums, but found the sphere too contracted. She felt that she needed the stimulus of public approval. She was almost in despair, when, as if by accident, her eye lighted on the North American Indian. For centuries he had been chasing the buffalo and the white man, shooting and being shot, taking up the tomahawk and perishing by the rifle, robbing and being robbed, massacring and pillaging whenever massacre and pillage suited his grim humor, and being all this while alternately pampered and starved, cajoled and cheated, by a government which at the same time that it furnished him with guns for shooting its own soldiers, often failed to fulfil the solemn treaties it had made with him.

He had been having this lively and variegated experience for a century or so, without any intimation, prophetic or present, of Miss Slopham's exist-

ence, when that lady discovered him, and when that happened she exclaimed: "He is mine!" Hers, she meant, for the purposes of philanthropy. Wicked tongues had suggested that in Miss Slopham's philanthropy distance lent enchantment to the view.

Only a day or two later, and before she had had time to form any plans, the postman brought a letter with the postmark of St. Louis. It read as follows:

"ST. LOUIS, *October* 20, 1881.

"MY DEAR MISS SLOPHAM,—I want to make an appeal to your benevolence, which I know never fails in case of need. There is in this city at this moment, in hiding, at the house of one of our friends, a poor persecuted Kickapoo. A Kickapoo is an Indian, you know. He has fled from his reservation because, he says, he cannot endure any longer the persecutions and wrongs he has received at the hands of the agent who has charge of the tribe. This agent must be a very bad man. Poor Ogla-Moga—that is his name; it means Young-man-who-digs-up-seed-potatoes-and-feeds-them-to-his-pony, he says, but we call him by his Indian name because it's so much prettier—says that this agent has repeatedly refused to let them go hunting, which is the only amusement the poor things have, on the miserable pretext that the hay must be got in; and he once took away the gun of one of the Kickapoos because he pretended to believe that the man had shot a settler, whereas there was no proof

of it at all, except, Ogla-Moga says, that the man died soon after the gun went off. Ogla-Moga says nothing wounds the self-respect of an Indian so deeply as to take his gun away from him, and we have all felt a great deal of sympathy with that poor insulted Kickapoo. Isn't it a shame that a great government should deliberately and maliciously oppress these unfortunate and high-spirited people?

"But I had almost forgotten what it was that I had to ask. Poor dear Ogla-Moga—he is so quiet and gentle and sad that we have all really grown fond of him—says that it won't be safe for him to stay here: the officers will soon be after him for having left his reservation. Now we have arranged to send him eastward with Mr. Michst. He is the new lecturer before our Ethical Circle, which meets every Sunday in Azure Hall. I read a paper there last Sunday, called, 'Is there Anything?' which Mr. Michst says contains the most triumphant series of negations he ever heard. He says I completely disprove the existence of everything, including many things we all know to be true. My friends in the Circle are begging me to publish it, and I think of doing so, under the title of 'The Everlasting No Indeed.'

"But I am wandering again. When Mr. Michst brings Ogla-Moga to you, can't you get him shelter somewhere? Mr. Michst thinks of taking him on to Washington, so that he may lay the whole matter before the President. We have

all been studying this Indian question for the last ten days, and we are convinced that the whole trouble is that the President doesn't understand it. Mr. Michst feels sure that if the President will give him, say, three days of his time, he can make it perfectly clear to him. Please answer by telegraph.

"Your friend,

"CLARA O. VERRAUGHT."

Now Miss Slopham lived in a neat and æsthetic apartment in a fashionable apartment-house, and it might have been supposed that she was hardly prepared to set up an asylum for fugitive Kickapoos. But that intrepid woman never faltered. Her answer went whirling by wire before she had paused to think of the ways and means of caring for poor Ogla-Moga.

"*October* 23.

"*Miss Clara O. Verraught, St. Louis, Missouri:*

"Let him come at once, and send his Indian costumes with him. I have a special reason for this request. AMELIA SLOPHAM."

Miss Slopham formed a plan. What it was will presently appear.

II.

Not many mornings after, there was the sound of a strange footstep in Miss Slopham's kitchen, and Bridget emitted a half-shriek. "Mither of Moses! what's that?" It was Ogla-Moga, who had just arrived. His costume was an extraordinary mixture of blanket and trousers and coat, hardly consistent with the requirements of civilization. A broad slouched hat hid his coarse black locks, and cast a friendly shadow over his piercing eyes and swarthy face.

"Here, Bridget," said Miss Slopham, "get some breakfast for this — a — a — gentleman at once." Miss Slopham was not accustomed to meeting Indians in a social way. She hardly knew whether to call him chief; she thought wildly for a moment of sheik; but compromised upon gentleman.

To Bridget's astonishment, her mistress hovered about while the strange dark man gobbled his food and glared upon her with his wild eyes. Still another stranger had come in with them; but this one wore the garments of civilization as if he were used to them. He was a bald young man—in fact, one of the baldest young men that ever was seen. He seemed to be bald all over. He had no ascertainable eyebrows, or eyelashes, or hair, and this, with his bright, fresh complexion and his big spectacles, gave him a very unworldly appearance.

"Oh, Miss Slobham," he said, "I haf been so much mofed wid de story of dis poor Indian! He iss a shild of nature. He hass been so quiet, and so goot, and so sad! I haf talked to him by de hour, and he hass not interroopted me vonce. I haf exblained to him the viewss of our Ettical Surkle upon de future state, and he hass listened so attentifely, and ven I haf looked at him I haf found dat he wass asleep. Oh, his sleep wass so benign! I haf vept; I could not hellp it. He iss a shild of nature;" and good Mr. Michst wiped a tear from his eye.

"Good! good!" grunted Ogla-Moga, as he put a block of beefsteak in his mouth without the formality of a fork.

"He hass eaten all de vay from St. Louis to here, and he never seem to haf enough," said Mr. Michst, in awe, looking at Ogla-Moga very much as one might at the phenomenon of a menagerie.

"Poor creatures! I've often heard that their supplies were sometimes cut off for months at a time. I suppose this is a case of that kind. Ogla-Moga," said Miss Slopham, addressing him with her most reassuring and eleemosynary smile, "does the government feed you often, you--a—poor Indians?"

"Not had—what you call it?—round meal—no, square meal," the Indian replied, making an explanatory parallelogram with his hands, "in four moons."

"Moonss?—moonss? What does he mean by moonss?"

Before the lady had time to make sure of her own knowledge on the subject, Ogla-Moga began a wild and mysterious pantomime, which caused Bridget, who had her eye steadily on the strange monster, and kept close to the window as an avenue of desperate retreat, to exclaim: "Mither of Moses! what's the baste going to do?" Ogla-Moga was throwing his arm up in the air with a fierce swing, suddenly crooking his elbow, and bringing his closed hand to his mouth, while he rolled his eyes around the room with a melodramatic ferocity, evidently intended to convey the idea of extreme rapture.

"Poor Ogla-Moga!" said Miss Slopham; "he wants something to drink. Give him a glass of ice-water, Bridget, and have it perfectly clear. It may remind him of the water he used to drink from the brooks of his far-off forest home;" and here Miss Slopham, in her turn, wiped a tear from her eye. Indeed, the crystal particle was apparently so surprised to find itself on the good lady's cheek that it seemed to disappear of its own accord.

Ogla-Moga looked at the innocent glass of Croton that was handed him with undisguised disdain; but he swallowed his thoughts, whatever they were, with the water, and signified that his meal was ended.

And now for the first time the extent of the task

she had undertaken became apparent to Miss Slopham. What was to be done with this terrible infant from the prairies during the week of seclusion that her plan made necessary? She lived alone, except for the companionship of Bridget, and it was asking a good deal of a timid and shrinking nature like Miss Slopham's to take into her little household a gentleman who rolled his eyes in such an alarming manner. Then, too, there were the proprieties, against which sins could not be committed even in the name of reform. Yet what else was there to be done? He could not be sent to a hotel: that meant publicity, and perhaps recapture by the emissaries of a cruel and unsympathetic government. She could not ask a friend to take him in. He could not be sent anywhere without danger. Finally a brilliant thought struck her just as she was on the verge of distraction, with Ogla-Moga's big eyes fastened on her all the while. There was the janitor of the apartment-house. He might easily be induced to take a boarder, and he would be discreet. Ogla-Moga could be kept in retirement in his rooms. She would act at once upon the idea. And yet what was she to say? How was she to account for the presence of this stranger in her little household? Ah! he needed clothes. His present costume was an impossible one. She would begin with this subject with the janitor's wife, and feel her way gradually. So she made her way to the top of the house.

It would be hard to say who was in the greatest

flutter when the janitor's door was opened upon her, Miss Slopham, whose maiden bosom was agitated with strange embarrassments, or Mrs. Doherty, who was not accustomed to receive calls from the ladies of the house. The former was so confused that she walked against a chair and knocked it over, gave a little scream, and stepped on the baby, which was sprawling on the floor, whereat the baby screamed, and she screamed, and Mrs. Doherty screamed—all of which did not tend to diminish the mental excitement of either of the ladies, especially as Mrs. Doherty had up to that moment been trying to dust off a chair with one hand while she held another baby with the other arm, and motioned with her head to a little girl—or perhaps she ought to be called a baby—who had charge of still two other babies, to take them out of the room. Poor Miss Slopham thought she had never seen so many babies in her life before, and the spectacle somehow only increased her bewilderment. So perhaps it was not to be wondered at that when she had sunk into a chair she should begin the conversation with the extraordinary and utterly unprecedented question :

"Oh, Mrs. Doherty, could you—a—could you—a—lend me—a—a pair of pantaloons?"

"A pair of what, Miss Slopham?" said the astounded Mrs. Doherty, in a low voice which expressed both the proper deference of the janitor's wife and the natural amazement of the woman.

"Oh, of course, I—I didn't mean to say that,"

poor Miss Slopham stammered, in hopeless embarrassment. "The fact is, there's a gentleman down stairs—a friend of mine, you know—he has no home, and very few clothes—and I want to get you to help me. He's down stairs now, and he's going to stay—I don't see how I am going to help it—and I must get a suit of clothes for him this afternoon. I suppose you think this is all very queer," said the poor lady in breathless confusion, with a little nervous laugh, thinking to herself at the same time that it certainly *was* very queer.

"I'm not at all sure that I understand ye, ma'am," said the bewildered woman, looking about her in an alarmed sort of way, as if she wondered whether Miss Slopham was quite a safe woman to be alone with.

"Oh, how can I explain it?" that lady cried, desperately. "Well," she said, drawing a long breath, "let's begin at the beginning. Of course you understand that I don't want any such clothes for myself?"

"No, ma'am, I suppose not," murmured Mrs. Doherty, evidently suspecting that the other was slightly insane.

"Well, I wanted to ask you about them, because I thought your husband might have some clothes he did not want. I'd pay him a good price for them, and they needn't be very good"—and again Miss Slopham struck that terrible snag of the conversation—"I want them for a gentleman who's got into trouble; I can't tell you what it is, but

he's got to keep out of the way of people. And the thing I wanted to ask you most, Mrs. Doherty," she said, in a pleading voice, conscious that she was twisting it all into a sad snarl, "was whether I couldn't get you and Mr. Doherty to take him to board up here with you for a while," and here the good lady sighed a sigh of relief in spite of her misery and confusion. She had at last let the cat out of the bag.

Mrs. Doherty's eyes were growing very large. The man needed new clothes; must have them that afternoon; there was a reason for his keeping out of the way; Miss Slopham would not tell what it was; the man had got into trouble. The idea grew bigger and bigger in Mrs. Doherty's mind, until at last it burst out with,

"But is it a jail-bird ye've got there, ma'am?"

"No, no," cried Miss Slopham, badly frightened in her turn at the other's fear. "How could you think such a thing? He's a gentleman, you know; quite an important man where he comes from. There are reasons why I can't tell you who he is. He doesn't want anybody to know it either. But a jail-bird! why, wait till you see him, Mrs. Doherty. He looks so gentle, and he's really handsome."

Mrs. Doherty looked at Miss Slopham. Miss Slopham was a wealthy tenant, and paid a large rent, and Mrs. Doherty was only the janitor's wife. But, after all, Mrs. Doherty was a woman, and Miss Slopham was a woman also, and Mrs. Do-

herty looked at Miss Slopham in the way in which only a woman can look at another woman ; looked at her gray and withered curls, and at her face, which had never, in the spring-time of Miss Slopham's youth, been the kind of face which painters celebrate and poets embalm in verse, and said nothing. What she may have thought, or whether she thought anything, was a matter of little consequence, for when the richer lady came to mention the terms at which she rated the hospitality of the Doherty household, Mrs. Doherty showed a positive anxiety to oblige her, and even murmured something about being glad to do anything in their power for such a kind lady.

Now began a week of agony for Miss Slopham. Ogla-Moga was duly installed in the Doherty apartment, and duly invested with a suit of Mr. Doherty's clothes. But the taste for roving was still strong upon him. The inner life of an apartment-house seemed to arouse all his savage curiosity, and the fact that the entrance to every apartment looked like the entrance to every other apartment gave rise to some disagreeable complications. In the second floor front, for example, a skirmish with a view to matrimony had long been in progress between the daughter of the family, Miss Josephine Ayr, and Mr. Margent, of the young and prosperous stock-broking firm of Margent & Bar, and the decisive engagement was plainly near at hand. The progress of the acquaintanceship had been watched with an interest not altogether

friendly by the second floor back, while Miss Slopham had deigned to catch such neutral and impartial glimpses of it as she could over the stairs from the third floor front. In fact, the second floor back, who bore the name of Pound, had in an unguarded moment introduced Mr. Margent to the second floor front, and had then in silent rage seen him borne away from them by Miss Josephine. Perhaps this was to be accounted for by the fact that the two marriageable daughters in the second floor back had been offered, to use the coarse expression of the young stock-broker, "with no takers" for a series of years, and perhaps by the bold and shocking manners of Miss Josephine, which were often the subject of remark in the Pound household, where the opinion was frequently heard that it was difficult to understand how old Mrs. Ayr could keep so cheerful with a daughter whose behavior was the scandal of all her acquaintances. By one of those unaccountable coincidences which will occur in apartment-houses, the remarks of the Ayrs about the Pounds were repeated to the Pounds, while at the same time the remarks of the Pounds about the Ayrs were repeated to the Ayrs, the result being that Miss Josephine said that it must be a great satisfaction to Mrs. Pound to feel that she would probably always have her daughters with her, especially as they were already of an age to have many tastes in common with her, and the Misses Pound said that it was truly painful to see people who had once been very

wealthy reduced in circumstances, like the Ayrs, for example, and that both families were carefully polite when they met.

Now Mr. Margent was thought to be on the point of declaring himself, and when he appeared one afternoon his intentions were obvious. He was, if possible, more scrupulously dressed than ever. His clothes, trimly cut in the latest style, were new and spotless. His plump, not to say puffy, face, of an overfed white, was as smooth-shaven as ever. His plentiful watch-chain and his elegant shoes and his expensive stockings were, if possible, more plentiful and elegant and expensive than ever. When Miss Josephine appeared in a fresh costume, his small gray eyes revolved about her with an appearance of sluggish satisfaction which for him was almost animation.

"Business," said he—"business 's been splendid this year. Tip-top. C. B & Q. brought us in ten thousand at one clip the other day. Fact;" and Mr. Margent paused for a fresh supply of ideas.

"How nice that is!" said Miss Josephine, gently, with a shade of tender appreciation in her voice.

"But it costs a dreadful deal to live. We all live at hotels, you know—all the boys. And then a fellow has to have his cab: all the boys have cabs. And then we've got to have clothes. But I'm economizing on that. I cut myself down to twenty suits last year. I don't see any use of a fellow's having more than twenty suits;" and

Mr. Margent paused again, intellectually out of breath.

"I think you're a very extravagant creature," said the charming Miss Josephine, playfully shaking her finger at him. "If you had a wife to take care of you, you wouldn't be allowed to spend so much money." "Well, do you know, I've been thinking of getting married. I was talking with the boys about it the other day. I said I believed a man could support a wife on seven thousand a year—keeping a fellow's cab, and staying at the hotel, you know, and all that sort of thing"—he hastened to add, with a little anxiety in his voice. "The boys bet I couldn't, and I bet I could, and I believe it was then that I really made up my mind to get married. Don't you believe it could be done on that?" Mr. Margent found himself the subject of a suffusion of ideas, and had the appearance of being surprised at his own gifts.

Miss Josephine was of the opinion, in a low voice, and with an expression of intense interest in the lace in her sleeve, that it could be done for that.

"Well, now," said the ardent youth, moving over to the sofa where she was sitting, and settling himself down beside her, "why shouldn't we get married? You're just the kind of girl I like—tip-top, you know. I like a girl with style about her. Come, say yes." And here the crude outlines of something like a joke, for the first time in Mr. Margent's history, began to be visible to him

in the dim recesses of his obese mind. "Let's make it buyer sixty days," and he laughed until his small eyes almost closed.

"And what's buyer sixty days, you horrid man?"

"Why, don't you know that? I should have thought you'd know that. It's when the buyer has sixty days to call for the stock. Let's get married in sixty days, and we'll invite all the boys."

Poor Miss Josephine! Was this her romance? She had not counted on much—but was this all? She was a sensible and practical girl, however. and the instructions of an excellent mother had not been lost upon her. She yielded herself to the embrace of this winsome wooer, her head drooped upon his shoulder, and he was just about to collect the dividend of a kiss, when the hall door swung open with a crash, and no other than Ogla-Moga plunged into the room, with a bundle intended for Miss Slopham. It was Ogla-Moga's unfortunate peculiarity that all floors were alike to him, and likewise all interiors. He stood in the dark hallway glaring with amazement upon the bewildered couple. Miss Josephine screamed, and Mr. Margent swore with actual animation. Ogla-Moga grew still more excited. He had learned enough of civilized life to know that strangers and intruders were objects of suspicion.

"G'out! g'out!" he roared, with his voice at prairie pitch. "G'out! or I put you out!"

Miss Josephine screamed again ; her estimable mother rushed in by the door leading to the bedrooms, followed by three children, all beside themselves with curiosity and wonder, and Mr. Ayr himself appeared in the doorway leading to the dining-room, in a state of respectable consternation ; and last of all appeared the heads of the two Misses Pound in the hallway outside, uttering simultaneously, with many deprecatory little bobs, the same words, to the effect that they thought perhaps some one was hurt, all of which only increased the wrath of Ogla-Moga, more than ever convinced that something was wrong.

"You no belong here!" he cried, swinging his arms wildly about. "This wigwam belongs gray squaw!"

Miss Josephine always persisted in believing that Ogla-Moga had first gone to the Pound door, and that the Misses Pound, who knew only too well that Mr. Margent was calling upon her, had sent him to the other. But if it were true, she had a real woman's revenge. She had no sooner descried them in the doorway than with wonderful presence of mind she fainted straight into Mr. Margent's arms, much to that gentleman's astonishment. It was a master-stroke. The Misses Pound disappeared as suddenly as if they had been pictures from a magic lantern, and had been slid off the screen. Mrs. Ayr at once looked more cheerful, and Mr. Ayr began an insane effort to remove Ogla-Moga from the premises, in which it would have

gone ill with him had it not been for a sudden vision of curl-papers and gray hair behind the Indian. His name was called in a voice he was accustomed to hear, he turned away, the door was banged to upon his heels, and the tableau closed.

The very next day Mrs. Gottom of the third floor back was to give a dinner party to the distinguished Italian musician, Signor Barbazzo. Mrs. Gottom was known among the irreverent young men of her acquaintance as "the menagerie woman." Her favorite exclamation was, "I must have a fresh lion," and visitors to her apartment were always sure of beholding the latest leonine specimens landed on these shores. Signor Barbazzo's freshness made him a *rarus leo*. He was famous, and all the world was waiting for him, but he had not yet appeared in public. As a cruel fate would have it, Mrs. Gottom fell sick the very day set for the dinner, and was compelled to resign her place as hostess to her pretty and simple-hearted niece, Miss Tristan, who had never seen Signor Barbazzo. As fate would also have it, that gentleman himself fell sick, and being in the habit of doing as he pleased among the barbarians of the West, sent no excuses. As fate would still have it, Ogla-Moga, taking the wrong door as usual, strolled into Mrs. Gottom's drawing-room, which happened to be empty, about an hour before dinner, settled himself in a luxurious arm-chair in the middle of the room, and—fell asleep. Half an hour later,

pretty Miss Tristan came rustling into the room with her coolest and sweetest dress on. She gave a start of surprise when she saw a man there, stepped forward, thinking that it was the distinguished guest himself, stopped again, seeing that he was fast asleep, and then taking a swift woman's glance at him, sped softly out of the room.

"Aunty, what do you think?" said she, breathlessly, running into that lady's room. "Signor Barbazzo is in the parlor, sound asleep in the big chair!"

"What are you saying, child? Signor Barbazzo in the parlor asleep! Nonsense!"

"But it must be he. Who else can it be? Hasn't he got long black hair?"

"Yes. And no beard or mustache? and a swarthy complexion?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well," said the aunt, wearily, "I suppose he has come in tired. Doing what he pleases, as they all do. But he mustn't be disturbed, on any account. I wish I was there to manage him. The other day at Mrs. Vicar's he went away in the middle of the dinner because the macaroni wasn't right. He'll do something dreadful, I suppose. Now be sure. *Don't* begin by making him cross. So if he should sleep an hour, keep the people quiet at all hazards, and let him sleep two hours if he wants to."

Poor Miss Tristan went back to the post of duty oppressed with a great responsibility. The servant

was stationed at the door to prevent any ringing of the bell, and as the guests came in one by one, they were warned in whispers not to rouse the sleeping lion. Very soon Mrs. Gottom's drawing-room presented a striking example of the homage due to genius. The guests stood about in little groups, conversing in the most timid whispers, and even making signs take the place of language, glancing every moment at the supposed great man in the chair, who had his legs stretched out before him, his head thrown back, and was, if it must be confessed, snoring audibly, not to say visibly. There was Professor Phyle, the celebrated phrenologist—a tall man, with a gaunt face and long gray hair. He had been a lion once, but was now out of date. There were also present Mrs. Blenkin, a comparatively new soprano, having seen only two seasons; Lieutenant Wray, a lion just caught, or rather polar bear, having only then returned from a trip to the arctic regions, in which his ship had covered itself with glory; a young lady who had written a novel, and another who had written a poem, both unpublished, but both understood to be of a mysterious excellence; and others not necessary to mention. Even for these great people the chance to see a genius off his guard was not to be resisted. He seemed to be so soundly asleep that they might safely approach him. They tiptoed toward him, and hovered about him, holding their breath meanwhile. The ladies gazed at him longest, and seemed best satisfied with their in-

spection, with the exception of Professor Phyle, who was in raptures.

"I have never," said he, in a blood-curdling whisper, and waving his hand toward the unconscious Ogla-Moga, while the guests gathered about to hear what his verdict would be, "seen a more distinctly musical face. It is remarkable. It ought to convert any skeptic to phrenology. The development of what we phrenologists call, for the sake of convenience, the organs of tune and time—just over and near the side of the eye—the fulness of the eyes, the exquisite mobility of the mouth, are fairly abno-or-r-mal," and here the learned professor's whisper made one's flesh creep. "And I have no doubt, if I could examine the organs which are concealed by those luxuriant locks"—and now the professor smiled his society smile, and his fingers rayed out toward the sleeping Indian's head in a nervous, eager way—"that I should find ideality, adhesiveness, time, hope, veneration, and so on, strongly developed, as in the case of the great composers." The ladies nodded at each other, and drew long breaths of astonishment.

"I am glad," continued the professor, in his most approving manner, "that this little social incident"—but now the smile was more labored, and his eyebrows went up with less ease than usual, for, to tell the truth, the professor, like the rest of the company, was getting a little hungry—"should have given us an opportunity to make a scientific proof of his great genius."

Meanwhile the lieutenant, who was a practical person, if he was a lion, bent toward the still snoring Ogla-Moga with his eyeglass.

"It's a singular thing," said he, coming back, "but the face doesn't seem at all Italian to me. It's more like an Indian's face than that of any civilized man I ever saw."

There was an indignant whisper of dissent all about.

"How can you say so?" responded the professor. "There are centuries of culture and refinement in that face—the stern old Roman cast softened and modified by generation after generation of the artistic training and cultivation of modern Italy. I would venture to assert from this mere glance at his face that his fathers before him for a long way back were musicians, and I would pick him out from a crowd on Broadway as a genius in music. Why," said the professor, with as much of a flourish as he could get into a whisper, "his very nostrils convict him."

It must be said that at that particular moment Ogla-Moga's nostrils were convicting him of a genius for music of a most discordant kind. He was snoring a profound snore whose chords could not be found in Beethoven or Rossini, nor even in Liszt or Wagner. Just as the professor finished his eulogy, there came a terrific rumble and rattle, and the Indian snored so loud that he fairly woke himself up. He raised himself up in the chair and looked about in speechless amazement. No one

spoke. All were waiting, with the deference due to genius, to see what the great man would do, and were, at the same time, if it must be confessed, a little overcome with the novelty of the situation. His black eye ran quickly from one to the other, when it fell upon the uniform of Lieutenant Wray, assumed on that occasion by the express wish of his hostess. At that sight, which must have recalled to Ogla-Moga's mind the power and authority of the Government of the United States, a look of terror blanched his face, and darting up, he fled through the open door into the hall, and disappeared, leaving behind him the impression that the eccentricity of distinguished Italian musicians is past finding out.

III.

Of many other of the deeds of Ogla-Moga—of how he imprisoned three estimable old ladies in the elevator, and before they were released had frightened them into hysterics; of how he at first took the milkman to be a brother Indian, and regularly for a time answered his morning howl with a terrifying war-whoop; of how he kept the house in turmoil by ringing an electric bell wherever he could find one, in doing which he took a childish delight—there is no need to speak here. Happily for Miss Slopham, it so came about that Ogla-Moga was rescued from all his scrapes without the

responsibility for him being traced to her, and without her secret being discovered, although many complaints poured into the office of the carelessness by which strange and dreadful men were allowed to get into the house—a subject, however, on which the landlord could never get any satisfactory information from Mr. Doherty. Happily for Miss Slopham again, the week of trial was almost ended. She had issued invitations to a reception for a Thursday evening, at which she caused it to be understood a paper would be read upon an important reform question. Many of her friends in the apartment-house were included in the bidding to this feast of reason. The evening had arrived, and she was seated in her reception-room, talking to the first-comer—a very tall and grave gentleman with solemn long hair. This was Mr. Blagg, the well-known newspaper correspondent. He was a most ingenious and laborious writer. Having accumulated a certain amount of information, he wrote it out on Monday to a paper in the far West, and on Tuesday to another paper in the far East, varying the mixture somewhat, and on Wednesday varying it again to a paper in the North, and on Thursday to a paper in the South, giving the kaleidoscope of gossip still another shake. If it be true that a stamp of the foot displaces every atom of the globe, and that a word, once spoken, never ceases to reverberate through the universe, the intellectual atmosphere must have been disorganized with the clash and confusion of

Mr. Blagg's contributions to contemporary history. But Mr. Blagg was also a general literary workman. He took contracts to write articles, pamphlets, and books, as a lawyer takes cases—not on their merits, but for the fee. If it must be admitted, he had written Miss Slopham s paper on the wrongs of the Indian, for a pecuniary compensation, for that lady was far from being a literary person.

"Oh, it is so strong, Mr. Blagg," she was saying, "so noble, and the array of facts is so overwhelming! Where did you get them? Oh, what a power your pen is!"

"Such as it is, Miss Slopham, it is always at your service;" and Mr. Blagg closed his eyes in a faint ecstasy. Unlike literary persons as a class, he was not reluctant to be openly appreciated. "As for the facts," he continued, "they were easily secured. I had occasion to write another article on the Indian question, taking an exactly opposite view, and I found that many of the facts, in the hands of a skilful artist, could be used in both articles. I have often found that plan beneficial. It economizes labor, gives exercise to all the intellectual faculties, and, where one can secure orders for a brace of documents to contradict each other, is, I may say"—and here Mr. Blagg coughed a little cough—"pleasant to the pocket."

"But I want your help still further, dear Mr. Blagg. We must make this poor Indian's cause our own. We must agitate the matter. I hope

that when this paper has been read to-night" (and Miss Slopham looked down at the roll in her lap), "you will be willing to write something about it to your papers. I want the influence of your pen to rouse the country."

"I'll do what my pen enables me to do, Miss Slopham; and I will say that I think it is not without its effect," replied Mr. Blagg, with the conscious pride of a man who knew that public opinion would never get itself properly moulded without his help.

"It will be painful for us, of course, to be involved in anything like notoriety, but" (and now a shade of lofty resignation passed over the lady's face), "we must bear it for the sake of the cause." Miss Slopham already called it "the cause."

But the company had begun to assemble. Mr. Michst was there, having deprived the Ethical Circle of the benefit of his ministrations for an entire week in order to be present. Mr. and Mrs. Ayr were there, with Miss Josephine and her lover, who was heard to remark that this would be "great larks to tell the boys." The Misses Pound were also there, conveying in their looks their profound pity for a young man so sadly insnared. Mrs. Gottom was there, with her pretty niece, who looked, as really pretty girls always do, prettier than ever. Professor Phyle was there, and Mrs. Blenkin. But Lieutenant Wray had not been able to accept Miss Slopham's invitation. There were

besides a considerable number of persons of limited celebrity, most of them fierce hobby riders, who, instead of leaving those unruly animals at home in their luxurious stalls, or outside of their friends' houses, as the instinct of politeness might have suggested, rode them boldly into the parlors of the best society, and ran them at full gallop into the midst of any conversation, so that often no sound could be heard but the noise of their hoofs. Of the number and kind of these hobbies there is no need here to speak, but when there were so many gathered into a single place, the neighing and snorting, the champing of conversational bits, and the pounding of huge and heavy feet were curious to behold and to hear.

And Ogla-Moga? Now the native costumes were coming into play, and Miss Slopham's long martyrdom was to have its reward. She had conveyed to the Indian her desire that he should discard the garments of civilization, and array himself in those of his pristine barbarity. Remembering also that an Indian toilet is not complete without a good deal of decorative art, she lent him a collection of artists' materials kept for purposes of æsthetic display, and explained to him how to use them. The result was that when he emerged he was a sight to strike terror into any heart. His robes became him fiercely, and the blazonry of his colors even frightened her a little. She began to wonder whether, after all, Indian reform might not be a dangerous pursuit. But all this was accom-

plished, in her haste, three hours before the time of the reception. What was to be done with him in the mean time? He must needs sit and wait, like the ladies in the olden time who on the occasion of some great fête were obliged, through the multiplicity of the hair-dresser's engagements, to pass under his hands early in the morning, perhaps, and then to sit like statues all day lest the lofty and beautiful structure on their heads should tumble into ruins. But how restrain him—this untutored Kickapoo? In her desperation a wild and wonderful scheme occurred to her. He had become savagely fond of raspberry jam. She would offer him a bribe of an unlimited quantity of this delicacy to go into some room and stay there, and once there, she would quietly lock the door. She canvassed in her mind all the rooms in her little box of a home. There was one, convenient, appropriate, and secure—the store-room. No sooner said than done. To see this fierce-looking Kickapoo clad in robes of savagery, and gleaming in all the paint of the war-path, seated on Miss Slopham's refrigerator, and looking about on either side with barbaric curiosity at her array of shelves of jars and bottles, while he ate raspberry jam out of a rare and elegant saucer with an exquisite silver spoon, might have seemed a ludicrous spectacle to anybody less austere than Miss Slopham. But she only gave a sigh of relief, and softly turned the key, and went away to prepare for her guests. Ogla-Moga did not miss her. He

finished the saucer of jam, and finished the jar, and then began explorations. He found various relishes, condiments, and preserves, and what not, all of which he tasted, some of which he enjoyed, and some of which he seemed to objurgate in choice Kickapoo. At last—for his terrific figure was now erect on the refrigerator—he saw something that sent a gleam of joy across his fiery face. It was a dark bottle that bore an inscription which he could not read, "S. O. P. Brandy." But there is one sense which needs no education. He pulled out the cork, and put the mouth of the bottle to his nostrils; then he smiled grimly, and straightway sat down on the refrigerator.

The time had arrived for Miss Slopham to read her paper. Mr. Michst claimed the attention of the company by tapping on a table with a paper-knife. "Laties and shentlemen," said he, "we haf come here dis efening as drue philossophers—not for our own selfish bleasure enti-er-*lee*, but"—Mr. Margent looked uneasy, and fidgeted in his chair—"in order to hellp in de solution of one of de great questions of de day—de Indian question. I haf met some off dese obbressed and downdrodden beoble. I know how amiable, how excellent, they are—like little shildren dey haf lissened to me ven I haf talked to dem of de *aura* of Schrellenbach and de ofersoul—all vunder, and, I know, all pelief. But I vill not take down de time. My young and pyootiful friend, Miss Slobham" (the good, loyal man was sadly near-sighted), "vill

read to you, and I belief she vill have some derrible dings to say."

Terrible things indeed! Miss Slopham's manuscript ran with gore—the gore of the red-man always. Massacres, surprises, and butcheries, in which the white man had slaked, only to renew it, his notorious thirst for Indian blood, followed each other across the pages of the paper, leaving each a darkening trail behind. The government of these United States, which, in the inconsistent, uncontinuous, and often bungling way of all governments, has probably tried to do its duty by the Indian—often succeeding only in making its benevolence a source of pauperism, and often betrayed by unfaithful officials and corrupt citizens into shameful acts of bad faith—was portrayed as a huge ogre, a giant Blunderbore, drinking Indian blood from two-quart bowls, and never breakfasting but on Indian baby. Meantime there filed through Miss Slopham's flowing sentences, like a procession of children with banners, the mild and faithful Modoc, the unsophisticated Sioux, the exemplary Pi-Ute, the large-eyed and pensive Pottawattamie, the Polished Nez-Percé, the amiable Pawnee, the meek and unobtrusive Ogallala, and the playful Apache. If there ever had been a massacre by Indians, or an act of savage cruelty by other than white men, it was not found necessary for the purposes of this paper to mention it. Perhaps emphasis is indispensable in advocating reforms, and Indian reforms are surely needed. At

all events, there was no lack of accentuation in Miss Slopham's paper. The little audience murmured to each other of its literary skill, and noticed that Mr. Blagg, who was a high authority, wore an approving smile.

"And now," she read, as she approached the end of the essay, "we have felt that there could be no better way to enlist the sympathies of practical men and women than to show them one of these unfortunate people as he is at home, in his native dress, in the picturesque pigments which he delights, in his innocent and child-like fancy, to adorn himself with, and to let you see how far he is from being the wretch he is represented to be, how clearly the natural mildness of his disposition, when unvexed by the tyranny of governments, shines through the manly beauty of his countenance. It has so happened that one of these poor creatures has been placed for a time under my charge" (and here a look of dawning suspicion began to appear simultaneously upon the faces of Miss Ayr and Miss Tristan), "and I shall be able to summon him in a few moments into your presence, and beg you to render, in behalf of this simple and suffering race, the kind yet impartial testimony of your own eyes. I ask this because"—

But what was this strange noise in the distance that made Miss Slopham pause in her reading, and sent a pallor across her cheek?—a sound as of the dragging of a heavy body through the private hallway leading from her kitchen—a sound as of a

struggle, and of scuffling and heavy breathing, and loud mutterings. It flashed upon her in an instant that she had forgotten the little window in the store-room. Had Ogla-Moga escaped? What had happened?

But she made an effort and resumed: "I ask this because—"

"Mither of Moses! what are ye a-doin'? Let go me hair, or I'll scrame for the perlice;" and forthwith there went up just outside of the drawing-room door a scream in the unmistakable voice of Bridget, which must have reached the traditionally absent policeman, no matter how far he was away.

The company had now started to their feet in astonishment and fright.

"Queltzcoatchstepukulistini!" — or that was what the response sounded like.

Another scream from Bridget.

"Akuishnapaccademipechacquinishcrekepa!"

In another instant an extraordinary group reeled into the doorway—Ogla-Moga, with his robes torn and spattered, his paint smeared out of its original lines and colors, and his face furrowed with scratches inflicted by the hands of Bridget—Ogla-Moga drunk, utterly drunk, and brandishing in the air a glittering carving-knife; and Bridget—alas! drunk too—with her hair in the firm grasp of the Indian, who was pulling her along.

There was a universal shriek of horror. Three of the ladies bolted through the only door which the Indian did not occupy, and which opened into

a small bedroom. They frantically pulled it shut, just as three other ladies seized the knob on the outside and tried to pull it open. As luck would have it, Miss Ayr and her mother and Mrs. Blenkin were on the inside, and the two Misses Pound were on the outside—a fact which did not seem to diminish the natural anxiety of the ladies on either side of the door for their personal safety. At all events, the tug of war went on. Mr. Blagg showed extreme terror, and being plainly reduced by the same to a state of utter intellectual confusion and imbecility, made an insane attempt to scale the heights of a large what-not in the corner of the room, which, of course, promptly came over with him, hurling him to the floor with great violence, and falling directly upon him, while it covered his body and the larger part of the floor with the fragments of unprecedented teapots and alleged salad-bowls. Mrs. Gottom and her niece barricaded themselves in the corner with a sofa, and armed themselves with huge photograph albums to be hurled at the enemy; while Professor Phyle, who was a prominent member of the Peace Society, quietly stepped into the window recess, and drew the curtains in defence of his person and his principles.

In the midst of the turmoil and dismay, Miss Tristan was heard to exclaim, "Oh, aunty, it is Signor Barbazzo!" and her aunt was heard to reply, with singular feeling, "Hold your tongue, child, and never speak to me again as long as you

live !'' There was a marked rustle of the curtains in front of Professor Phyle at this episode. Meantime Mr. Michst, with a blind idea of doing something, without knowing in the least what it ought to be, had confronted the Indian, who still stood there muttering and shaking his knife. Just then he gave a terrible tug at Bridget's hair, that imparted a projectile motion to her as he swung her away from him. Her lowered head struck Mr. Michst with full force in the neighborhood of the diaphragm, and the two went down on the floor with a crash. Mr. Margent, the first to recover his presence of mind, stepped over the extended toes of Miss Slopham, who had simply dropped into a chair in a dead faint, firmly seized the Indian's rigth hand, in which the knife was held, and putting his other hand on the Indian's shoulder, gently and easily tripped him up, and when he had got him down sat on his prostrate form. It had hardly been done when a dark little man slipped into the room, cast a swift glance around, and without stopping to look his astonishment, in a flash locked a pair of handcuffs on Ogla-Moga's wrists. In the hall outside was a vision of two policemen.

Mr. Margent, without betraying the least surprise, slowly got up, pulled a toothpick out of his pocket, and began to use it, while he looked down upon the Indian. '' What's he done ?'' he asked, coolly.

'' Oh, all sorts of things : killed a missionary ;

poured a can of kerosene on his squaw, and tried to set her on fire, because he wanted to take another one ; and so on. The worst Kickapoo of the lot. I've had hard work to find him ; but," with a grin, "I never expected to find him in a place like this."

Ogla-Moga had fallen asleep then and there ! The harsh music of his snore filled the room. To several persons present it had a familiar sound. Professor Phyle, who had stuck his head out of the curtains, drew it in again suddenly, like the timid turtle.

"Poor Ogla-Moga !" said Miss Slopham, who had recovered, and had been listening. "What else could be expected under a cruel and despotic government ?"

"Ogla-Moga ? Yes, ma'am, that's his name among the tribe. I'm the agent's deputy. We called him Ugly-Mug, and that was the way the Indians pronounced it. It *is* ugly, you see, ma'am."

It *was* ugly. It was the last blow. Miss Slopham said not another word, and, strange to say, Mr. Blagg never mentioned these interesting incidents in his correspondence.

A MEMORABLE MURDER.

By Celia Thaxter.

AT the Isles of Shoals, on the 5th of March in the year 1873, occurred one of the most monstrous tragedies ever enacted on this planet. The sickening details of the double murder are well known; the newspapers teemed with them for months: but the pathos of the story is not realized; the world does not know how gentle a life these poor people led, how innocently happy were their quiet days. They were all Norwegians. The more I see of the natives of this far-off land, the more I admire the fine qualities which seem to characterize them as a race. Gentle, faithful, intelligent, God-fearing human beings, they daily use such courtesy toward each other and all who come in contact with them, as puts our ruder Yankee manners to shame. The men and women living on this lonely island were like the sweet, honest, simple folk we read of in Björnson's charming Norwegian stories,

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full of kindly thoughts and ways. The murdered Anethe might have been the Eli of Björnson's beautiful Arne or the Ragnhild of Boyesen's lovely romance. They rejoiced to find a home just such as they desired in this peaceful place; the women took such pleasure in the little house which they kept so neat and bright, in their flock of hens, their little dog Ringe, and all their humble belongings! The Norwegians are an exceptionally affectionate people; family ties are very strong and precious among them. Let me tell the story of their sorrow as simply as may be.

Louis Wagner murdered Anethe and Karen Christensen at midnight on the 5th of March, two years ago this spring. The whole affair shows the calmness of a practiced hand; *there was no malice in the deed*, no heat; it was one of the coolest instances of deliberation ever chronicled in the annals of crime. He admits that these people had shown him nothing but kindness. He says in so many words, "They were my best friends." They looked upon him as a brother. Yet he did not hesitate to murder them. The island called Smutty-Nose by human perversity (since in old times it bore the pleasanter title of Haley's Island) was selected to be the scene of this disaster. Long ago I lived two years upon it, and know well its whitened ledges and grassy slopes, its low thickets of wild-rose and bayberry, its sea-wall still intact, connecting it with the small island Malaga, opposite Appledore, and the ruined break-water which links it with Cedar

Island on the other side. A lonely cairn, erected by some long ago forgotten fishermen or sailors, stands upon the highest rock at the southeastern extremity; at its western end a few houses are scattered, small, rude dwellings, with the square old Haley house near; two or three fish-houses are falling into decay about the water-side, and the ancient wharf drops stone by stone into the little cove, where every day the tide ebbs and flows and ebbs again with pleasant sound and freshness. Near the houses is a small grave-yard, where a few of the natives sleep, and not far, the graves of the fourteen Spaniards lost in the wreck of the ship Sagunto in the year 1813. I used to think it was a pleasant place, that low, rocky, and grassy island, though so wild and lonely.

From the little town of Laurvig, near Christiania, in Norway, came John and Maren Hontvet to this country, and five years ago took up their abode in this desolate spot, in one of the cottages facing the cove and Appledore. And there they lived through the long winters and the lovely summers, John making a comfortable living by fishing, Maren, his wife, keeping as bright and tidy and sweet a little home for him as man could desire. The bit of garden they cultivated in the summer was a pleasure to them; they made their house as pretty as they could with paint and paper and gay pictures, and Maren had a shelf for her plants at the window; and John was always so good to her, so kind and thoughtful of her comfort and of what would please

her, she was entirely happy. Sometimes she was a little lonely, perhaps, when he was tossing afar off on the sea, setting or hauling his trawls, or had sailed to Portsmouth to sell his fish. So that she was doubly glad when the news came that some of her people were coming over from Norway to live with her. And first, in the month of May, 1871, came her sister Karen, who stayed only a short time with Maren, and then came to Appledore, where she lived at service two years, till within a fortnight of her death. The first time I saw Maren she brought her sister to us, and I was charmed with the little woman's beautiful behavior; she was so gentle, courteous, decorous, she left on my mind a most delightful impression. Her face struck me as remarkably good and intelligent, and her gray eyes were full of light.

Karen was a rather sad-looking woman, about twenty-nine years old; she had lost a lover in Norway long since, and in her heart she fretted and mourned for this continually: she could not speak a word of English at first, but went patiently about her work and soon learned enough, and proved herself an excellent servant, doing faithfully and thoroughly everything she undertook, as is the way of her people generally. Her personal neatness was most attractive. She wore gowns made of cloth woven by herself in Norway, a coarse blue stuff, always neat and clean, and often I used to watch her as she sat by the fire spinning at a spinning-wheel brought from her own country; she

made such a pretty picture, with her blue gown and fresh white apron, and the nice, clear white muslin bow with which she was in the habit of fastening her linen collar, that she was very agreeable to look upon. She had a pensive way of letting her head droop a little sideways as she spun, and while the low wheel hummed monotonously, she would sit crooning sweet, sad old Norwegian airs by the hour together, perfectly unconscious that she was affording such pleasure to a pair of appreciative eyes. On the 12th of October, 1872, in the second year of her stay with us, her brother, Ivan Christensen, and his wife, Anethe Mathea, came over from their Norseland in an evil day, and joined Maren and John at their island, living in the same house with them.

Ivan and Anethe had been married only since Christmas of the preceding year. Ivan was tall, light-haired, rather quiet and grave. Anethe was young, fair, and merry, with thick, bright sunny hair, which was so long it reached, when unbraided, nearly to her knees ; blue-eyed, with brilliant teeth and clear, fresh complexion, beautiful, and beloved beyond expression by her young husband, Ivan. Mathew Hontvet, John's brother, had also joined the little circle a year before, and now Maren's happiness was complete. Delighted to welcome them all, she made all things pleasant for them, and she told me only a few days ago, "I never was so happy in my life as when we were all living there together." So they abode in peace and quiet, with

not an evil thought in their minds, kind and considerate toward each other, the men devoted to their women and the women repaying them with interest, till out of the perfectly cloudless sky one day a bolt descended, without a whisper of warning, and brought ruin and desolation into that peaceful home.

Louis Wagner, who had been in this country seven years, appeared at the Shoals two years before the date of the murder. He lived about the islands during that time. He was born in Ueckermünde, a small town of lower Pomerania, in Northern Prussia. Very little is known about him, though there were vague rumors that his past life had not been without difficulties, and he had boasted foolishly among his mates that "not many had done what he had done and got off in safety;" but people did not trouble themselves about him or his past, all having enough to do to earn their bread and keep the wolf from the door. Maren describes him as tall, powerful, dark, with a peculiarly quiet manner. She says she never saw him drunk—he seemed always anxious to keep his wits about him: he would linger on the outskirts of a drunken brawl, listening to and absorbing everything, but never mixing himself up in any disturbance. He was always lurking in corners, lingering, looking, listening, and he would look no man straight in the eyes. She spoke, however, of having once heard him disputing with some sailors, at table, about some point of navigation; she did not understand

it, but all were against Louis, and, waxing warm, all strove to show him he was in the wrong. As he rose and left the table she heard him mutter to himself with an oath, "I know I'm wrong, but I'll never give in!" During the winter preceding the one in which his hideous deed was committed he lived at Star Island and fished alone, in a wherry; but he made very little money, and came often over to the Hontvets, where Maren gave him food when he was suffering from want, and where he received always a welcome and the utmost kindness. In the following June he joined Hontvet in his business of fishing, and took up his abode as one of the family at Smutty-Nose. During the summer he was "crippled," as he said, by the rheumatism, and they were all very good to him, and sheltered, fed, nursed and waited upon him the greater part of the season. He remained with them five weeks after Ivan and Anethe arrived, so that he grew to know Anethe as well as Maren, and was looked upon as a brother by all of them, as I have said before. Nothing occurred to show his true character, and in November he left the island and the kind people whose hospitality he was to repay so fearfully, and going to Portsmouth he took passage in another fishing schooner, the Addison Gilbert, which was presently wrecked off the coast, and he was again thrown out of employment. Very recklessly he said to Waldemar Ingebertsen, to Charles Jonsen, and even to John Hontvet himself, at different times, that "he must have money if he murdered

for it." He loafed about Portsmouth eight weeks, doing nothing. Meanwhile Karen left our service in February, intending to go to Boston and work at a sewing-machine, for she was not strong and thought she should like it better than housework, but before going she lingered awhile with her sister Maren—fatal delay for her! Maren told me that during this time Karen went to Portsmouth and had her teeth removed, meaning to provide herself with a new set. At the Jonsens', where Louis was staying, one day she spoke to Mrs. Jonsen of her mouth, that it was so sensitive since the teeth had been taken out; and Mrs. Jonsen asked her how long she must wait before the new set could be put in. Karen replied that it would be three months. Louis Wagner was walking up and down at the other end of the room with his arms folded, his favorite attitude. Mrs. Jonsen's daughter passed near him and heard him mutter, "Three months! What is the use! In three months you will be dead!" He did not know the girl was so near, and turning, he confronted her. He knew she must have heard what he said, and he glared at her like a wild man.

On the fifth day of March, 1873, John Hontvet, his brother Mathew, and Ivan Christensen set sail in John's little schooner, the Clara Bella, to draw their trawls. At that time four of the islands were inhabited: one family on White Island, at the light-house; the workmen who were building the new hotel on Star Island, and one or two households be-

side; the Hontvet family at Smutty-Nose; and on Appledore, the household at the large house, and on the southern side, opposite Smutty-Nose, a little cottage, where lived Jörge Edvardt Ingebertsen, his wife and children, and several men who fished with him. Smutty-Nose is not in sight of the large house at Appledore, so we were in ignorance of all that happened on that dreadful night, longer than the other inhabitants of the Shoals.

John, Ivan and Mathew went to draw their trawls, which had been set some miles to the eastward of the islands. They intended to be back to dinner, and then to go on to Portsmouth with their fish, and bait the trawls afresh, ready to bring back to set again next day. But the wind was strong and fair for Portsmouth and ahead for the islands; it would have been a long beat home against it; so they went on to Portsmouth, without touching at the island to leave one man to guard the women, as had been their custom. This was the first night in all the years Maren had lived there that the house was without a man to protect it. But John, always thoughtful for her, asked Emil Ingebertsen, whom he met on the fishing-grounds, to go over from Appledore and tell her that they had gone on to Portsmouth with the favoring wind, but that they hoped to be back that night. And he would have been back had the bait he expected from Boston arrived on the train in which it was due. How curiously everything adjusted itself to favor the bringing about of this horrible catastrophe! The

bait did not arrive till the half-past twelve train, and they were obliged to work the whole night getting their trawls ready, thus leaving the way perfectly clear for Louis Wagner's awful work.

The three women left alone watched and waited in vain for the schooner to return, and kept the dinner hot for the men, and patiently wondered why they did not come. In vain they searched the wide horizon for that returning sail. Ah me, what pathos is in that longing look of women's eyes for far-off sails! That gaze, so eager, so steadfast, that it would almost seem as if it must conjure up the ghostly shape of glimmering canvas from the mysterious distances of sea and sky, and draw it unerringly home by the mere force of intense wistfulness! And those gentle eyes, that were never to see the light of another sun, looked anxiously across the heaving sea till twilight fell, and then John's messenger, Emil, arrived—Emil Ingebertsen, courteous and gentle as a youthful knight—and reassured them with his explanation, which having given, he departed, leaving them in a much more cheerful state of mind. So the three sisters, with only the little dog Ringe for a protector, sat by the fire chatting together cheerfully. They fully expected the schooner back again that night from Portsmouth, but they were not ill at ease while they waited. Of what should they be afraid? They had not an enemy in the world! No shadow crept to the fireside to warn them what was at hand, no portent of death chilled the air as they talked

their pleasant talk and made their little plans in utter unconsciousness. Karen was to have gone to Portsmouth with the fishermen that day; she was all ready dressed to go. Various little commissions were given her, errands to do for the two sisters she was to leave behind. Maren wanted some buttons, and "I'll give you one for a pattern; I'll put it in your purse," she said to Karen, "and then when you open your purse you'll be sure to remember it." (That little button, of a peculiar pattern, was found in Wagner's possession afterward.) They sat up till ten o'clock, talking together. The night was bright and calm; it was a comfort to miss the bitter winds that had raved about the little dwelling all the long, rough winter. Already it was spring; this calm was the first token of its coming. It was the 5th of March; in a few weeks the weather would soften, the grass grow green, and Anethe would see the first flowers in this strange country, so far from her home where she had left father and mother, kith and kin, for love of Ivan. The delicious days of summer at hand would transform the work of the toiling fishermen to pleasure, and all things would bloom and smile about the poor people on the lonely rock! Alas, it was not to be.

At ten o'clock they went to bed. It was cold and "lonesome" up-stairs, so Maren put some chairs by the side of the lounge, laid a mattress upon it, and made up a bed for Karen in the kitchen, where she presently fell asleep. Maren and Anethe slept

in the next room. So safe they felt themselves, they did not pull down a curtain, nor even try to fasten the house-door. They went to their rest in absolute security and perfect trust. It was the first still night of the new year; a young moon stole softly down toward the west, a gentle wind breathed through the quiet dark, and the waves whispered gently about the island, helping to lull those innocent souls to yet more peaceful slumber. Ah, where were the gales of March that might have plowed that tranquil sea to foam, and cut off the fatal path of Louis Wagner to that happy home! But nature seemed to pause and wait for him. I remember looking abroad over the waves that night and rejoicing over "the first calm night of the year!" It was so still, so bright! The hope of all the light and beauty a few weeks would bring forth stirred me to sudden joy. There should be spring again after the long winter-weariness.

> "Can trouble live in April days,
> Or sadness in the summer moons?"

I thought, as I watched the clear sky, grown less hard than it had been for weeks, and sparkling with stars. But before another sunset it seemed to me that beauty had fled out of the world, and that goodness, innocence, mercy, gentleness, were a mere mockery of empty words.

Here let us leave the poor women, asleep on the lonely rock, with no help near them in heaven or upon earth, and follow the fishermen to Portsmouth,

where they arrived about four o'clock that afternoon. One of the first men whom they saw as they neared the town was Louis Wagner; to him they threw the rope from the schooner, and he helped draw her in to the wharf. Greetings passed between them; he spoke to Mathew Hontvet, and as he looked at Ivan Christensen, the men noticed a flush pass over Louis's face. He asked were they going out again that night? Three times before they parted he asked that question; he saw that all the three men belonging to the island had come away together; he began to realize his opportunity. They answered him that if their bait came by the train in which they expected it, they hoped to get back that night, but if it was late they should be obliged to stay till morning, baiting their trawls; and they asked him to come and help them. It is a long and tedious business, the baiting of trawls; often more than a thousand hooks are to be manipulated, and lines and hooks coiled, clear of tangles, into tubs, all ready for throwing overboard when the fishing-grounds are reached. Louis gave them a half promise that he would help them, but they did not see him again after leaving the wharf. The three fishermen were hungry, not having touched at their island, where Maren always provided them with a supply of food to take with them; they asked each other if either had brought any money with which to buy bread, and it came out that every one had left his pocket-book at home. Louis, standing by, heard all this. He asked John, then, if he had

made fishing pay. John answered that he had cleared about six hundred dollars.

The men parted, the honest three about their business; but Louis, what became of him with his evil thoughts? At about half-past seven he went into a liquor shop and had a glass of something; not enough to make him unsteady,—he was too wise for that. He was not seen again in Portsmouth by any human creature that night. He must have gone, after that, directly down to the river, that beautiful, broad river, the Piscataqua, upon whose southern bank the quaint old city of Portsmouth dreams its quiet days away; and there he found a boat ready to his hand, a dory belonging to a man by the name of David Burke, who had that day furnished it with new thole-pins. When it was picked up afterward off the mouth of the river, Louis's anxious oars had eaten half-way through the substance of these pins, which are always made of the hardest, toughest wood that can be found. A terrible piece of rowing must that have been, in one night! Twelve miles from the city to the Shoals,—three to the light-houses, where the river meets the open sea, nine more to the islands; nine back again to Newcastle next morning! He took that boat, and with the favoring tide dropped down the rapid river where the swift current is so strong that oars are scarcely needed, except to keep the boat steady. Truly all nature seemed to play into his hands; this first relenting night of earliest spring favored him with its stillness, the tide was fair,

the wind was fair, the little moon gave him just enough light, without betraying him to any curious eyes, as he glided down the three miles between the river banks, in haste to reach the sea. Doubtless the light west wind played about him as delicately as if he had been the most human of God's creatures; nothing breathed remonstrance in his ear, nothing whispered in the whispering water that rippled about his inexorable keel, steering straight for the Shoals through the quiet darkness. The snow lay thick and white upon the land in the moonlight; lamps twinkled here and there from dwellings on either side; in Eliot and Newcastle, in Portsmouth and Kittery, roofs, chimneys, and gables showed faintly in the vague light; the leafless trees clustered dark in hollows or lifted their tracery of bare boughs in higher spaces against the wintry sky. His eyes must have looked on it all, whether he saw the peaceful picture or not. Beneath many a humble roof honest folk were settling into their untroubled rest, as "this planned piece of deliberate wickedness" was stealing silently by with his heart full of darkness, blacker than the black tide that swirled beneath his boat and bore him fiercely on. At the river's mouth stood the sentinel light-houses, sending their great spokes of light afar into the night, like the arms of a wide humanity stretching into the darkness helping hands to bring all who needed succor safely home. He passed them, first the tower at Fort Point, then the taller one at Whale's Back, steadfastly holding

aloft their warning fires. There was no signal from the warning bell as he rowed by, though a danger more subtle, more deadly, than fog, or hurricane, or pelting storm was passing swift beneath it. Unchallenged by anything in earth or heaven, he kept on his way and gained the great outer ocean, doubtless pulling strong and steadily, for he had no time to lose, and the longest night was all too short for an undertaking such as this. Nine miles from the light-houses to the islands! Slowly he makes his way; it seems to take an eternity of time. And now he is midway between the islands and the coast. That little toy of a boat with its one occupant in the midst of the awful, black, heaving sea! The vast dim ocean whispers with a thousand waves; against the boat's side the ripples lightly tap, and pass and are lost; the air is full of fine, mysterious voices of winds and waters. Has he no fear, alone there on the midnight sea with such a purpose in his heart? The moonlight sends a long, golden track across the waves; it touches his dark face and figure, it glitters on his dripping oars. On his right hand Boone Island light shows like a setting star on the horizon, low on his left the two beacons twinkle off Newburyport, at the mouth of the Merrimack River; all the light-houses stand watching along the coast, wheeling their long, slender shafts of radiance as if pointing at this black atom creeping over the face of the planet with such colossal evil in his heart. Before him glitters the Shoals' light at White Island, and helps to guide him to his prey.

Alas, my friendly light-house, that you should serve so terrible a purpose! Steadily the oars click in the rowlocks: stroke after stroke of the broad blades draws him away from the lessening line of land, over the wavering floor of the ocean, nearer the lonely rocks. Slowly the coast-lights fade, and now the rote of the sea among the lonely ledges of the Shoals salutes his attentive ear. A little longer and he nears Appledore, the first island, and now he passes by the snow-covered, ice-bound rock, with the long buildings showing clear in the moonlight. He must have looked at them as he went past. I wonder we who slept beneath the roofs that glimmered to his eyes in the uncertain light did not feel, through the thick veil of sleep, what fearful thing passed by! But we slumbered peacefully as the unhappy woman whose doom every click of those oars in the rowlocks, like the ticking of some dreadful clock, was bringing nearer and nearer. Between the islands he passes; they are full of chilly gleams and glooms. There is no scene more weird than these snow-covered rocks in winter, more shudderful and strange: the moonlight touching them with mystic glimmer, the black water breaking about them, and the vast shadowy spaces of the sea stretching to the horizon on every side, full of vague sounds, of half lights and shadows, of fear, and of mystery. The island he seeks lies before him, lone and still; there is no gleam in any window, there is no help near, nothing upon which the women can call for succor. He

does not land in the cove where all boats put in; he rows round to the south side and draws his boat up on the rocks. His red returning footsteps are found here next day, staining the snow. He makes his way to the house he knows so well.

All is silent: nothing moves, nothing sounds but the hushed voices of the sea. His hand is on the latch, he enters stealthily, there is nothing to resist him. The little dog, Ringe, begins to bark sharp and loud, and Karen rouses, crying, "John, is that you?" thinking the expected fishermen had returned. Louis seizes a chair and strikes at her in the dark; the clock on a shelf above her head falls down with the jarring of the blow, and stops at exactly seven minutes to one. Maren, in the next room, waked suddenly from her sound sleep, trying in vain to make out the meaning of it all, cries, "What's the matter?" Karen answers, "John scared me!" Maren springs from her bed and tries to open her chamber door; Louis has fastened it on the other side by pushing a stick through over the latch. With her heart leaping with terror the poor child shakes the door with all her might, in vain. Utterly confounded and bewildered, she hears Karen screaming, "John kills me! John kills me!" She hears the sound of repeated blows and shrieks, till at last her sister falls heavily against the door, which gives way, and Maren rushes out. She catches dimly a glimpse of a tall figure outlined against the southern window; she seizes poor Karen and drags her with the

strength of frenzy within the bedroom. This unknown terror, this fierce, dumb monster who never utters a sound to betray himself through the whole, pursues her with blows, strikes her three times with a chair, either blow with fury sufficient to kill her, had it been light enough for him to see how to direct it; but she gets her sister inside and the door shut, and holds it against him with all her might and Karen's failing strength. What a little heroine was this poor child, struggling with the force of desperation to save herself and her sisters!

All this time Anethe lay dumb, not daring to move or breathe, roused from the deep sleep of youth and health by this nameless, formless terror. Maren, while she strives to hold the door at which Louis rattles again and again, calls to her in anguish, "Anethe, Anethe! Get out of the window! run! hide!" The poor girl, almost paralyzed with fear, tries to obey, puts her bare feet out of the low window, and stands outside in the freezing snow, with one light garment over her cowering figure, shrinking in the cold winter wind, the clear moonlight touching her white face and bright hair and fair young shoulders. "Scream! scream!" shouts frantic Maren. "Somebody at Star Island may hear!" but Anethe answers with the calmness of despair, "I cannot make a sound." Maren screams herself, but the feeble sound avails nothing. "Run! run!" she cries to Anethe; but again Anethe answers, "I cannot move."

Louis has left off trying to force the door; he

listens. Are the women trying to escape? He goes out-of-doors. Maren flies to the window: he comes round the corner of the house and confronts Anethe where she stands in the snow. The moonlight shines full in his face; she shrieks loudly and distinctly, "Louis, Louis!"

Ah, he is discovered, he is recognized! Quick as thought he goes back to the front door, at the side of which stands an ax, left there by Maren, who had used it the day before to cut the ice from the well. He returns to Anethe standing shuddering there. It is no matter that she is beautiful, young, and helpless to resist, that she has been kind to him, that she never did a human creature harm, that she stretches her gentle hands out to him in agonized entreaty, crying piteously, "Oh, Louis, Louis, Louis!" He raises the ax and brings it down on her bright head in one tremendous blow, and she sinks without a sound and lies in a heap, with her warm blood reddening the snow. Then he deals her blow after blow, almost within reach of Maren's hands, as she stands at the window. Distracted, Maren strives to rouse poor Karen, who kneels with her head on the side of the bed; with desperate entreaty she tries to get her up and away, but Karen moans, "I cannot, I cannot." She is too far gone; and then Maren knows she cannot save her, and that she must flee herself or die. So, while Louis again enters the house, she seizes a skirt and wraps round her shoulders, and makes her way out of the open window, over Anethe's murdered body,

barefooted, flying away, anywhere, breathless, shaking with terror.

Where can she go? Her little dog, frightened into silence, follows her,—pressing so close to her feet that she falls over him more than once. Looking back she sees Louis has lit a lamp and is seeking for her. She flies to the cove; if she can but find his boat and row away in it and get help! It is not there; there is no boat in which she can get away. She hears Karen's wild screams,—he is killing her! Oh, where can she go? Is there any place on that little island where he will not find her? She thinks she will creep into one of the empty old houses by the water; but no, she reflects, if I hide there, Ringe will bark and betray me the moment Louis comes to look for me. And Ringe saved her life, for next day Louis's bloody tracks were found all about those old buildings where he had sought her. She flies, with Karen's awful cries in her ears, away over rocks and snow to the farthest limit she can gain. The moon has set; it is about two o'clock in the morning, and oh, so cold! She shivers and shudders from head to feet, but her agony of terror is so great she is hardly conscious of bodily sensation. And welcome is the freezing snow, the jagged ice and iron rocks that tear her unprotected feet, the bitter brine that beats against the shore, the winter winds that make her shrink and tremble; "they are not so unkind as man's ingratitude!" Falling often, rising, struggling on with feverish haste, she makes her way to the very edge of the water; down

almost into the sea she creeps, between two rocks, upon her hands and knees, and crouches, face downward, with Ringe nestled close beneath her breast, not daring to move through the long hours that must pass before the sun will rise again. She is so near the ocean she can almost reach the water with her hand. Had the wind breathed the least roughly the waves must have washed over her. There let us leave her and go back to Louis Wagner. Maren heard her sister Karen's shrieks as she fled. The poor girl had crept into an unoccupied room in a distant part of the house, striving to hide herself. He could not kill her with blows, blundering in the darkness, so he wound a handkerchief about her throat and strangled her. But now he seeks anxiously for Maren. *Has* she escaped? What terror is in the thought! Escaped, to tell the tale, to accuse him as the murderer of her sisters. Hurriedly, with desperate anxiety, he seeks for her. His time was growing short; it was not in his programme that this brave little creature should give him so much trouble; he had not calculated on resistance from these weak and helpless women. Already it was morning, soon it would be daylight. He could not find her in or near the house; he went down to the empty and dilapidated houses about the cove, and sought her everywhere. What a picture! That blood-stained butcher, with his dark face, crawling about those cellars, peering for that woman! He dared not spend any more time; he must go back for the money he hoped to find, his

reward for this! All about the house he searches, in bureau drawers, in trunks and boxes: he finds fifteen dollars for his night's work! Several hundreds were lying between some sheets folded at the bottom of a drawer in which he looked. But he cannot stop for more thorough investigation; a dreadful haste pursues him like a thousand fiends. He drags Anethe's stiffening body into the house, and leaves it on the kitchen floor. If the thought crosses his mind to set fire to the house and burn up his two victims, he dares not do it: it will make a fatal bonfire to light his homeward way; besides, it is useless, for Maren has escaped to accuse him, and the time presses so horribly!

But how cool a monster is he! After all this hard work he must have refreshment, to support him in the long row back to the land; knife and fork, cup and plate, were found next morning on the table near where Anethe lay; fragments of food which was not cooked in the house, but brought from Portsmouth, were scattered about. Tidy Maren had left neither dishes nor food when they went to bed. The handle of the tea-pot which she had left on the stove was stained and smeared with blood. Can the human mind conceive of such hideous *nonchalance?* Wagner sat down in that room and ate and drank! It is almost beyond belief! Then he went to the well with a basin and towels, tried to wash off the blood, and left towels and basin in the well. He knows he must be gone! It is certain death to linger. He

takes his boat and rows away toward the dark coast and the twinkling lights; it is for dear life, now! What powerful strokes send the small skiff rushing over the water!

There is no longer any moon, the night is far spent; already the east changes, the stars fade: he rows like a madman to reach the land, but a blush of morning is stealing up the sky, and sunrise is rosy over shore and sea, when panting, trembling, weary, a creature accursed, a blot on the face of the day, he lands at Newcastle — too late! Too late! In vain he casts the dory adrift; she will not float away; the flood tide bears her back to give her testimony against him, and afterward she is found at Jaffrey's Point, near the "Devil's Den," and the fact of her worn thole-pins noted. Wet, covered with ice from the spray which has flown from his eager oars, utterly exhausted, he creeps to a knoll and reconnoitres; he thinks he is unobserved, and crawls on towards Portsmouth. But he is seen and recognized by many persons, and his identity established beyond a doubt. He goes to the house of Mathew Jonsen, where he has been living, steals up-stairs, changes his clothes, and appears before the family, anxious, frightened, agitated, telling Jonsen he never felt so badly in his life; that he has got into trouble and is afraid he shall be taken. He cannot eat at breakfast, says "farewell forever," goes away and is shaved, and takes the train to Boston, where he provides himself with new clothes, shoes, a complete outfit, but lingering, held by fate, he

cannot fly, and before night the officer's hand is on his shoulder and he is arrested.

Meanwhile poor shuddering Maren on the lonely island, by the water-side, waits till the sun is high in heaven before she dares to come forth. She thinks he may be still on the island. She said to me, "I thought he must be there, dead or alive. I thought he might go crazy and kill himself after having done all that." At last she steals out. The little dog frisks before her; it is so cold her feet cling to the rocks and snow at every step, till the skin is fairly torn off. Still and frosty is the bright morning, the water lies smiling and sparkling, the hammers of the workmen building the new hotel on Star Island sound through the quiet air. Being on the side of Smutty-Nose opposite Star, she waves her skirt, and screams to attract their attention; they hear her, turn and look, see a woman waving a signal of distress, and, surprising to relate, turn tranquilly to their work again. She realizes at last there is no hope in that direction; she must go round toward Appledore in sight of the dreadful house. Passing it afar off she gives one swift glance toward it, terrified lest in the broad sunshine she may see some horrid token of last night's work; but all is still and peaceful. She notices the curtains the three had left up when they went to bed; they are now drawn down; she knows whose hand has done this, and what it hides from the light of day. Sick at heart, she makes her painful way to the northern edge of Malaga, which is connected with

Smutty-Nose by the old sea-wall. She is directly opposite Appledore and the little cottage where abide her friend and countryman, Jörge Edvardt Ingebertsen, and his wife and children. Only a quarter of a mile of the still ocean separates her from safety and comfort. She sees the children playing about the door; she calls and calls. Will no one ever hear her? Her torn feet torment her, she is sore with blows and perishing with cold. At last her voice reaches the ears of the children, who run and tell their father that some one is crying and calling; looking across, he sees the poor little figure waving her arms, takes his dory and paddles over, and with amazement recognizes Maren in her night-dress, with bare feet and streaming hair, with a cruel bruise upon her face, with wild eyes, distracted, half senseless with cold and terror. He cries, "Maren, Maren, who has done this? what is it? who is it?" and her only answer is "Louis, Louis, Louis!" as he takes her on board his boat and rows home with her as fast as he can. From her incoherent statement he learns what has happened. Leaving her in the care of his family, he comes over across the hill to the great house on Appledore. As I sit at my desk I see him pass the window, and wonder why the old man comes so fast and anxiously through the heavy snow.

Presently I see him going back again, accompanied by several of his own countrymen and others of our workmen, carrying guns. They are going to Smutty-Nose, and take arms, thinking it possible

Wagner may yet be there. I call down-stairs, "What has happened?" and am answered, "Some trouble at Smutty-Nose; we hardly understand." "Probably a drunken brawl of the reckless fishermen who may have landed there," I say to myself, and go on with my work. In another half-hour I see the men returning, reinforced by others, coming fast, confusedly; and suddenly a wail of anguish comes up from the women below. I cannot believe it when I hear them crying, "Karen is dead! Anethe is dead! Louis Wagner has murdered them both!" I run out into the servants' quarters; there are all the men assembled, an awe-stricken crowd. Old Ingebertsen comes forward and tells me the bare facts, and how Maren lies at his house, half-crazy, suffering with her torn and frozen feet. Then the men are dispatched to search Appledore, to find if by any chance the murderer might be concealed about the place, and I go over to Maren to see if I can do anything for her. I find the women and children with frightened faces at the little cottage; as I go into the room where Maren lies, she catches my hands, crying, "Oh, I so glad to see you! I so glad I save my life!" and with her dry lips she tells me all the story as I have told it here. Poor little creature, holding me with those wild, glittering, dilated eyes, she cannot tell me rapidly enough the whole horrible tale. Upon her cheek is yet the blood-stain from the blow he struck her with a chair, and she shows me two more upon her shoulder, and her torn feet. I go back for

arnica with which to bathe them. What a mockery seems to me the "jocund day" as I emerge into the sunshine, and looking across the space of blue, sparkling water, see the house wherein all that horror lies!

Oh, brightly shines the morning sun and glitters on the white sails of the little vessel that comes dancing back from Portsmouth before the favoring wind, with the two husbands on board! How glad they are for the sweet morning and the fair wind that brings them home again! And Ivan sees in fancy Anethe's face all beautiful with welcoming smiles, and John knows how happy his good and faithful Maren will be to see him back again. Alas, how little they dream what lies before them! From Appledore they are signalled to come ashore, and Ivan and Mathew, landing, hear a confused rumor of trouble from tongues that hardly can frame the words that must tell the dreadful truth. Ivan only understands that something is wrong. His one thought is for Anethe; he flies to Ingebertsen's cottage, she may be there; he rushes in like a maniac, crying, "Anethe, Anethe! Where is Anethe?" and broken-hearted Maren answers her brother, "Anethe is—at home." He does not wait for another word, but seizes the little boat and lands at the same time with John on Smutty-Nose; with headlong haste they reach the house, other men accompanying them; ah, there are blood-stains all about the snow! Ivan is the first to burst open the door and enter. What words can tell it! There

upon the floor, naked, stiff and stark, is the woman he idolizes, for whose dear feet he could not make life's ways smooth and pleasant enough—stone dead! Dead—horribly butchered! her bright hair stiff with blood, the fair head that had so often rested on his breast crushed, cloven, mangled with the brutal ax! Their eyes are blasted by the intolerable sight: both John and Ivan stagger out and fall, senseless, in the snow. Poor Ivan! his wife a thousand times adored, the dear girl he had brought from Norway, the good, sweet girl who loved him so, whom he could not cherish tenderly enough! And he was not there to protect her! There was no one there to save her!

> "Did heaven look on
> And would not take their part!"

Poor fellow, what had he done that fate should deal him such a blow as this! Dumb, blind with anguish, he made no sign.

> "What says the body when they spring
> Some monstrous torture-engine's whole
> Strength on it? No more says the soul."

Some of his pitying comrades lead him away, like one stupefied, and take him back to Appledore. John knows his wife is safe. Though stricken with horror and consumed with wrath, he is not paralyzed like poor Ivan, who has been smitten with worse than death. They find Karen's body in another part of the house, covered with blows and black in the face, strangled. They find Louis's tracks,—all

the tokens of his disastrous presence,—the contents of trunks and drawers scattered about in his hasty search for the money, and all within the house and without, blood, blood, everywhere.

When I reach the cottage with the arnica for Maren, they have returned to Smutty-Nose. John, her husband, is there. He is a young man of the true Norse type, blue-eyed, fair-haired, tall and well made, with handsome teeth and bronzed beard. Perhaps he is a little quiet and undemonstrative generally, but at this moment he is superb, kindled from head to feet, a firebrand of woe and wrath, with eyes that flash and cheeks that burn. I speak a few words to him,—what words can meet such an occasion as this!—and having given directions about the use of the arnica, for Maren, I go away, for nothing more can be done for her, and every comfort she needs is hers. The outer room is full of men; they make way for me, and as I pass through I catch a glimpse of Ivan crouched with his arms thrown round his knees and his head bowed down between them, motionless, his attitude expressing such abandonment of despair as cannot be described. His whole person seems to shrink, as if deprecating the blow that has fallen upon him.

All day the slaughtered women lie as they were found, for nothing can be touched till the officers of the law have seen the whole. And John goes back to Portsmouth to tell his tale to the proper authorities. What a different voyage from the one he had just taken, when happy and careless he was return-

ing to the home he had left so full of peace and comfort! What a load he bears back with him, as he makes his tedious way across the miles that separate him from the means of vengeance he burns to reach! But at last he arrives, tells his story, the police at other cities are at once telegraphed, and the city marshal follows Wagner to Boston. At eight o'clock that evening comes the steamer Mayflower to the Shoals, with all the officers on board. They land and make investigations at Smutty-Nose, then come here to Appledore and examine Maren, and, when everything is done, steam back to Portsmouth, which they reach at three o'clock in the morning. After all are gone and his awful day's work is finished at last, poor John comes back to Maren, and kneeling by the side of her bed, he is utterly overpowered with what he has passed through; he is shaken with sobs as he cries, "Oh, Maren, Maren, it is too much, too much! I cannot bear it!" And Maren throws her arms about his neck, crying, "Oh, John, John, don't! I shall be crazy, I shall die, if you go on like that." Poor innocent, unhappy people, who never wronged a fellow-creature in their lives!

But Ivan—what is their anguish to his? They dare not leave him alone lest he do himself an injury. He is perfectly mute and listless; he cannot weep, he can neither eat nor sleep. He sits like one in a horrid dream. "Oh, my poor, poor brother!" Maren cries in tones of deepest grief, when I speak his name to her next day. She herself cannot rest

a moment till she hears that Louis is taken; at every sound her crazed imagination fancies he is coming back for her; she is fairly beside herself with terror and anxiety; but the night following that of the catastrophe brings us news that he is arrested, and there is stern rejoicing at the Shoals; but no vengeance on him can bring back those unoffending lives, or restore that gentle home. The dead are properly cared for; the blood is washed from Anethe's beautiful bright hair; she is clothed in her wedding-dress, the blue dress in which she was married, poor child, that happy Christmas time in Norway, a little more than a year ago. They are carried across the sea to Portsmouth, the burial service is read over them, and they are hidden in the earth After poor Ivan has seen the faces of his wife and sister still and pale in their coffins, their ghastly wounds concealed as much as possible, flowers upon them and the priest praying over them, his trance of misery is broken, the grasp of despair is loosened a little about his heart. Yet hardly does he notice whether the sun shines or no, or care whether he lives or dies. Slowly his senses steady themselves from the effects of a shock that nearly destroyed him, and merciful time, with imperceptible touch, softens day by day the outlines of that picture, at the memory of which he will never cease to shudder while he lives.

Louis Wagner was captured in Boston on the evening of the next day after his atrocious deed, and Friday morning, followed by a hooting mob,

he was taken to the Eastern depot. At every station along the route crowds were assembled, and there were fierce cries for vengeance. At the depot in Portsmouth a dense crowd of thousands of both sexes had gathered, who assailed him with yells and curses and cries of "Tear him to pieces!" It was with difficulty he was at last safely imprisoned. Poor Maren was taken to Portsmouth from Appledore on that day. The story of Wagner's day in Boston, like every other detail of the affair, has been told by every newspaper in the country: his agitation and restlessness, noted by all who saw him; his curious, reckless talk. To one he says, "I have just killed two sailors;" to another, Jacob Toldtman, into whose shop he goes to buy shoes, "I have seen a woman lie as still as that boot," and so on. When he is caught he puts on a bold face and determines to brave it out; denies everything with tears and virtuous indignation. The men whom he has so fearfully wronged are confronted with him; his attitude is one of injured innocence; he surveys them more in sorrow than in anger, while John is on fire with wrath and indignation, and hurls maledictions at him; but Ivan, poor Ivan, hurt beyond all hope or help, is utterly mute; he does not utter one word. Of what use is it to curse the murderer of his wife? It will not bring her back; he has no heart for cursing, he is too completely broken. Maren told me the first time she was brought into Louis's presence, her heart leaped so fast she could hardly breathe. She entered the room softly with

her husband and Mathew Jonsen's daughter. Louis was whittling a stick. He looked up and saw her face, and the color ebbed out of his, and rushed back and stood in one burning spot in his cheek, as he looked at her and she looked at him for a space, in silence. Then he drew about his evil mind the detestable garment of sanctimoniousness, and in sentimental accents he murmured, "I'm glad Jesus loves me!" "The devil loves you!" cried John, with uncompromising veracity. "I know it wasn't nice," said decorous Maren, "but John couldn't help it; it was too much to bear!"

The next Saturday afternoon, when he was to be taken to Saco, hundreds of fishermen came to Portsmouth from all parts of the coast, determined on his destruction, and there was a fearful scene in the quiet streets of that peaceful city when he was being escorted to the train by the police and various officers of justice. Two thousand people had assembled, and such a furious, yelling crowd was never seen or heard in Portsmouth. The air was rent with cries for vengeance; showers of bricks and stones were thrown from all directions, and wounded several of the officers who surrounded Wagner. His knees trembled under him, he shook like an aspen, and the officers found it necessary to drag him along, telling him he must keep up if he would save his life. Except that they feared to injure the innocent as well as the guilty, those men would have literally torn him to pieces. But at last he was put on board the cars in safety, and

carried away to prison. His demeanor throughout the term of his confinement, and during his trial and subsequent imprisonment, was a wonderful piece of acting. He really inspired people with doubt as to his guilt. I make an extract from the Portsmouth Chronicle, dated March 13th, 1873: "Wagner still retains his amazing *sang froid*, which is wonderful, even in a strong-nerved German. The sympathy of most of the visitors at his jail has certainly been won by his calmness and his general appearance, which is quite prepossessing." This little instance of his method of proceeding I must subjoin: A lady who had come to converse with him on the subject of his eternal salvation said, as she left him, "I hope you put your trust in the Lord," to which he sweetly answered, "I always did, ma'am, and I always shall."

A few weeks after all this had happened, I sat by the window one afternoon, and, looking up from my work, I saw some one passing slowly,—a young man who seemed so thin, so pale, so bent and ill, that I said, "Here is some stranger who is so very sick, he is probably come to try the effect of the air, even thus early." It was Ivan Christensen. I did not recognize him. He dragged one foot after the other wearily, and walked with the feeble motion of an old man. He entered the house; his errand was to ask for work. He could not bear to go away from the neighborhood of the place where Anethe had lived and where they had been so happy, and he could not bear to work at fishing on the

south side of the island, within sight of that house. There was work enough for him here; a kind voice told him so, a kind hand was laid on his shoulder, and he was bidden come and welcome. The tears rushed into the poor fellow's eyes, he went hastily away, and that night sent over his chest of tools,—he was a carpenter by trade. Next day he took up his abode here and worked all summer. Every day I carefully observed him as I passed him by, regarding him with an inexpressible pity, of which he was perfectly unconscious, as he seemed to be of everything and everybody. He never raised his head when he answered my "Good-morning," or "Good-evening, Ivan." Though I often wished to speak, I never said more to him, for he seemed to me to be hurt too sorely to be touched by human hand. With his head sunk on his breast, and wearily dragging his limbs, he pushed the plane or drove the saw to and fro with a kind of dogged persistence, looking neither to the left nor right. Well might the weight of woe he carried bow him to the earth! By and by he spoke, himself, to other members of the household, saying, with a patient sorrow, he believed it was to have been, it had so been ordered, else why did all things so play into Louis's hands? All things were furnished him: the knowledge of the unprotected state of the women, a perfectly clear field in which to carry out his plans, just the right boat he wanted in which to make his voyage, fair tide, fair wind, calm sea, just moonlight enough; even the ax with which to kill Anethe

stood ready to his hand at the house door. Alas, it was to have been! Last summer Ivan went back again to Norway—alone. Hardly is it probable that he will ever return to a land whose welcome to him fate made so horrible. His sister Maren and her husband still live blameless lives, with the little dog Ringe, in a new home they have made for themselves in Portsmouth, not far from the river-side; the merciful lapse of days and years takes them gently but surely away from the thought of that season of anguish; and though they can never forget it all, they have grown resigned and quiet again. And on the island other Norwegians have settled, voices of charming children sound sweetly in the solitude that echoed so awfully to the shrieks of Karen and Maren. But to the weirdness of the winter midnight something is added, a vision of two dim, reproachful shades who watch while an agonized ghost prowls eternally about the dilapidated houses at the beach's edge, close by the black, whispering water, seeking for the woman who has escaped him—escaped to bring upon him the death he deserves, whom he never, never, never can find, though his distracted spirit may search till man shall vanish from off the face of the earth, and time shall be no more.

VENETIAN GLASS.

By Brander Matthews.

I.

IN THE OLD WORLD.

THEY had been to the Lido for a short swim in the slight but bracing surf of the Adriatic. They had had a midday breakfast in a queer little restaurant, known only to the initiated and therefore early discovered by Larry, who had a keen scent for a cook learned in the law. They had loitered along the Riva degli Schiavoni, looking at a perambulatory puppet-show, before which a delighted audience sturdily disregarded the sharp wind which bravely fluttered the picturesque tatters of the spectators; and they were moved to congratulate the Venetians on their freedom from the monotonous repertory of the Anglo-American Punch-and-Judy, which consists solely of a play really unique in the exact sense of that much-

*** *Hitherto unpublished.*

abused word. They were getting their fill of the delicious Italian art which is best described by an American verb—to loaf. And yet they were not wont to be idle, and they had both the sharp, quick American manner, on which laziness sits uneasily and infrequently.

John Manning and Laurence Laughton were both young New Yorkers. Larry—for so in youth was he called by everybody pending the arrival of years which should make him a universal uncle, to be known of all men as "Uncle Larry"—was as pleasant a travelling companion as one could wish. He was the only son and heir of a father, now no more, but vaguely understood when alive and in the flesh to have been "in the China trade"—although whether this meant crockery or Cathay no one was able with precision to declare. Larry Laughton had been graduated from Columbia College with the class of 1860, and the following spring found him here in Venice after a six months' ramble through Europe with his old friend, John Manning, partly on foot and partly in an old carriage of their own, in which they enjoyed the fast-vanishing pleasures of posting.

John Manning was a little older than Larry; he had left West Point in 1854 with a commission as second lieutenant in the ——first Cavalry. For nearly six years he did his duty in that state of life in which it pleased the Secretary of War and General Scott to call him; he had crossed the plains one bleak winter to a post in the Rocky

Mountains, and he had danced through two summers at Fort Adams at Newport; he had been stationed for a while in New Mexico, where there was an abundance of the pleasant sport of Indian-fighting—even now he had only to make believe a little to see the tufted head of a Navajo peer around the columns supporting the Lion of Saint Mark, or to mistake the fringe of *facchini* on the edge of the Grand Canal for a group of the shiftless half-breeds of New Mexico. In time the ——first Cavalry had been ordered North, where the work was then less pleasant than on the border; and, in fact, it was a distinct unwillingness to execute the Fugitive Slave Law which forced John Manning to resign his commission in the army, although it was the hanging of John Brown which drew from him the actual letter of resignation. Before settling down to other work, for he was a man who could not and would not be idle, he had gratified his long desire of taking a turn through the Old World. Larry Laughton had joined him in Holland, where he had been making researches into the family history, and proving to his own satisfaction at least that the New York Mannings, in spite of their English name, had come from Amsterdam to New Amsterdam. And now, toward the end of April, 1861, John Manning and Laurence Laughton stood on the Rialto, hesitating *Fra Marco e Tedaro*, as the Venetians have it, in uninterested question whether they should go into the Ghetto, among the hideous homes of the chosen

people, or out again to Murano for a second visit to the famous factory of Venetian glass.

"I say, John," remarked Larry as they lazily debated the question, gazing meanwhile on the steady succession of gondolas coming and going to and from the steps by the side of the bridge, "I'd as lief if not liefer go to Murano again, if they've any of their patent anti-poison goblets left. You know they say they used to make a glass so fine that it was shattered into shivers whenever poison might be poured into it. Of course I don't believe it, but a glass like that would be mighty handy in the sample-rooms of New York. I'm afraid a man walking up Broadway could use up a gross of the anti-poison goblets before he got one straight drink of the genuine article, unadulterated and drawn from the wood."

"You must not make fun of a poetic legend, Larry. You have to believe everything over here or you do not get the worth of your money," said John Manning.

"Well, I don't know," was Larry's reply; "I don't know just what to believe. I was talking about it last night at Florian's, while you were writing letters home."

"I did not know Mr. Laughton had friends in Venice."

"Oh, I can make friends anywhere. And this one was lots of fun. He was a priest, an *abbate*, I think he calls himself. He had read five newspapers in the *caffè* and paid for one tiny cup of

coffee. When I finished the *Débats* I passed it to him for his sixth—and he spoke to me in French, and I wasn't going to let an Italian talk French to me without answering back, so I just sailed in and began to swap stories with him."

"No doubt you gave him much valuable information."

"Well, I did; I just exuded information. Why, the first thing he said, when I told him I was an American, was to wonder whether I hadn't met his brother, who was also in America—in Rio Janeiro—just as if Rio was the other side of the North River!"

John Manning smiled at Larry's disgusted expression, and asked, "What has this *abbate* to do with the fragile Venetian glass?"

"Only this," answered Larry. "I told him two or three North-westers, just as well as I could in French, and then he said that marvellous things were also done here once upon a time. And he told me about the glass which broke when poison was poured into it."

"It is a pleasant superstition," said John Manning. "I think Poe makes use of it, and I believe Shakespeare refers to it."

"But did either Poe or Shakespeare say anything about the two goblets just alike made for the twin brothers Manin nearly four hundred years ago? Did they tell you how one glass was shivered by poison and its owner killed, and how the other brother had to flee for his life? Did they inform

you that the unbroken goblet exists to this day, and is in fact now for sale by an Hebrew Jew who peddles antiquities? Did they tell you that?"

"Neither Edgar Allan Poe nor William Shakespeare ever disturbs my slumbers by telling me anything of the sort," laughed Manning.

"Well, my *abbate* told me just that, and he gave me the address of the Shylock who has the surviving goblet for sale."

"Suppose we go there and see it," suggested Manning, "and you can tell me the whole story of the twin brothers as we go along."

"Shall we take a gondola or walk?" was Larry's interrogative acceptance of the suggestion.

"It's in the Ghetto, isn't it?"

"Most of the Jew curiosity dealers have left the Ghetto. Our Shylock has a palace on the Grand Canal. I guess we had better take a gondola, though it can't be far."

So they sat themselves down in one of the aquatic cabs which ply the water streets of the city in the sea. The gondolier stood to his oar and put his best foot foremost, and as the boat sped forward on its way along the capital S of the Grand Canal, Larry told the tale of the twin brothers and the shattered goblet.

"Well, it seems that some time in the sixteenth century, say three hundred years ago or thereabout, there were several branches of the great and powerful Manin family—the same family to which the patriotic Daniele Manin belonged, you

know. And at the head of one of these branches were the twin brothers Marco Manin and Giovanni Manin. Now, these brothers were devoted to each other, and they had only one thought, one word, one deed. When one of them happened to think of a thing, it often happened that the other brother did it. So it was not surprising that they both fell in love with the same woman. She was a dangerous-looking, yellow-haired woman, with steel-gray eyes—that is, if her eyes were not really green, as to which there was doubt. But there was no doubt at all that she was powerfully handsome. The *abbate* said that there was a famous portrait of her in one of these churches as a Saint Mary Magdalen with her hair down. She was a splendid creature, and lots of men were running after her besides the twin Manins. The two brothers did not quarrel with each other about the woman, but they did quarrel with some of her other lovers, and particularly with a nobleman of the highest rank and power, who was supposed to belong not only to the Council of Ten but to the Three. Between this man and the Manins there was war to the knife and the knife to the hilt. One day Marco Manin expressed a wish for one of these goblets of Venetian glass so fine that poison shatters it, and so Giovanni went out to Murano and ordered two of them, of the very finest quality, and just alike in every particular of color and shape and size. You see the twins always had everything in pairs. But the people at Murano somehow misunderstood

the order, and although they made both glasses they sent home only one. Marco Manin was at table when it arrived, and he took it in his hand at once, and after admiring its exquisite workmanship—you see, all these old Venetians had the art-feeling strongly developed—he told a servant to fill it to the brim with Cyprus wine. But as he raised the flowing cup to his lips it shivered in his grasp and the wine was spilt on the marble floor. He drew his sword and slew the servant who had sought to betray him, and rushing into the street he found himself face to face with the enemy whom he knew to have instigated the attempt. They crossed swords at once, but before Marco Manin could have a fair fight for his life he was stabbed in the back by a glass stiletto, the hilt of which was broken off short in the wound."

"Where was his brother all this time?" was the first question with which John Manning broke the thread of his friend's story.

"He had been to see the yellow-haired beauty, and he came back just in time to meet his brother's lifeless body as it was carried into their desolate home. Holding his dead brother's hand as he had often held it living, he promised his brother to avenge his death without delay and at any cost. Then he prepared at once for flight. He knew that Venice would be too hot to hold him when the deed was done; and besides, he felt that without his brother life in Venice would be intolerable. So he made ready for flight. Twenty-four hours to a

minute after Marco Manin's death the body of the hireling assassin was sinking to the bottom of the Grand Canal, while the man who had paid for the murder lay dead on the same spot with the point of a glass stiletto in his heart! And when they wanted to send him the other goblet, there was no one to send it to: Giovanni Manin had disappeared."

"Where had he gone?" queried John Manning.

"That's what I asked the *abbate*, and he said he didn't know for sure, but that in those days Venice had a sizable trade with the Low Countries, and there was a tradition that Giovanni Manin had gone to the Netherlands."

"To Holland?" asked John Manning with unwonted interest.

"Yes, to Amsterdam or to Rotterdam or to some one of those -dam towns, as we used to call them in our geography class."

"It was to Amsterdam," said Manning, speaking as one who had certain information.

"How do you know that?" asked Larry. "Even the *abbate* said it was only a tradition that he had gone to Holland at all."

"He went to Amsterdam," said Manning; "that I know."

Before Larry could ask how it was that his friend knew anything about the place of exile of a man whom he had never heard of ten minutes earlier, the gondola had paused before the door of the palace in which dwelt the dealer in antiquities who

had in his possession the famous goblet of Venetian glass. As they ascended to the sequence of rambling rooms cluttered with old furniture, rusty armor, and odds and ends of statuary, in the which the modern Jew of Venice sat at the receipt of custom, both Larry Laughton and John Manning had to give their undivided attention to the framing in Italian of their wishes. Shylock himself was a venerable and benevolent person, with a look of wonderful shrewdness and an incomprehensibility of speech, for he spoke the Venetian dialect with a harsh Jewish accent, either of which would have daunted a linguistic veteran. Plainly enough, conversation was impossible, for he could barely understand their American-Italian, and they could not at all understand his Jewish-Venetian. But it would not do to let these *Inglesi* go away without paying tribute.

"Ciò!" said Shylock, smiling graciously at his futile attempts to open communication with the enemy. Then he called Jessica from the deep window where she had been at work on the quaint old account-books of the shop, as great curiosities as anything in it, since they were kept in Venetian, but by means of the Hebrew alphabet. She spoke Italian, and to her the young men made known their wants. She said a few words to her father, and he brought forth the goblet.

It was a marvellous specimen of the most exquisite Venetian workmanship. A pair of green serpents with eyes that glowed like fire writhed around the

golden stem of a blood-red bowl, and as the white light of the cloudless sky fell on it from the broad window, it burned in the glory of the sunshine and seemed to fill itself full of some mysterious and royal wine. Shylock revolved it slowly in his hand to show the strange waviness of its texture, and as it turned, the serpents clung more closely to the stem and arched their heads and shot a glance of hate at the strangers who came to gaze on them with curious fascination.

John Manning looked at the goblet long and eagerly. "How did it come into your possession?" he asked.

And Jessica translated Shylock's declaration that the goblet had been at Murano for hundreds of years; it was *antico – antichissimo*, as the signor could see for himself. It was of the best period of the art. That Shylock would guarantee. How came it into his possession? By the greatest good fortune. It was taken from Murano during the troubles after the fall of the Republic in the time of Napoleon. It had gone finally into the hands of a certain count, who, very luckily, was poor. *Conte che non conta, non conta niente.* So Shylock had been enabled to buy it. It had been the desire of his heart for years to own so fine an object.

"How much do you want for it?" asked John Manning.

Shylock scented from afar the battle of bargaining, dear in Italy to both buyer and seller. He gave a keen look at both the *Inglesi*, and took up

the glass affectionately, as though he could not bear to part with it. Jessica interpreted. Shylock had intended that goblet for his own private collection, but the frank and generous manner of their excellencies had overcome him, and he would let them have it for five hundred florins.

"Five hundred florins! Phew!" whistled Larry, astonished in spite of his initiation into the mysteries of Italian bargaining. "Well, if you were to ask me the Shakespearian conundrum, Hath not a Jew eyes? I shouldn't give it up; I should say he has eyes—for the main chance."

"Five hundred florins," said John Manning. "Very well. I'll take it."

Shylock's astonishment at getting four times what he would have taken was equalled only by his regret that he had not asked twice as much.

"Can you pack it so that I can take it to New York safely?"

"*Sicuro*, signor," and Shylock agreed to have the precious object boxed with all possible care and despatch, and delivered at the hotel that afternoon.

"Servo suo!" said Jessica, as they stood at the door.

"Bon di, Patron!" responded Larry in Venetian fashion; then as the door closed behind them he said to John Manning, "Seems to me you were in a hurry! You could have had that glass for half the money."

"Perhaps I could," was Manning's quiet reply, "but I was eager to get it back at once."

"Get it back? Why, it wasn't stolen from *you*, was it? I never did suppose *he* came by it honestly."

"It was not stolen from me personally. But it belonged to my family. It was made for Giovanni Manin, who fled from Venice to Amsterdam three hundred odd years ago. His grandson and namesake left Amsterdam for New Amsterdam half a century later. And when the English changed New Amsterdam into New York, Jan Mannin became John Manning—and I am his direct descendant, and the first of my blood to return to Venice to get the goblet Giovanni Manin ordered and left behind."

"Well, I'm damned!" said Larry, pensively.

"And now," continued John Manning as they took their seats in the gondola, "tell the man to go to the church where the picture of Mary Magdalen is. I want a good look at that woman!"

In the evening, as John Manning sat in a little *caffè* under the arcades of the Piazza San Marco, sipping a tiny cup of black coffee, Larry entered with a rush of righteous indignation.

"What's the matter, Larry?" was John Manning's calm query.

"There's the devil to pay at home. South Carolina has fired on the flag at Sumter."

Three weeks later Colonel Manning was assigned to duty in the Army of the Potomac.

II.

IN THE NEW WORLD.

In the month of February, 1864, a chance newspaper paragraph informed whom it might concern that Major Laurence Laughton, having three weeks' leave of absence from his regiment, was at the Astor House. In consequence of this advertisement of his whereabouts, Major Laughton received many cheerful circulars and letters, in most of which his attention was claimed for the artificial limb made by the advertiser. He also received a letter from Colonel John Manning urgently bidding him to come out for a day at least to his little place on the Hudson, where he was lying sick, and, as he feared, sick unto death. On the receipt of this Larry cut short a promising flirtation with a war-widow who sat next him at table and took the first train up the river. It was a bleak day, and there was at least a foot of snow on the ground, as hard and as dry as though it had clean forgot that it was made of water. As Larry left the little station, to which the train had slowly struggled at last, an hour behind time, the wind sprang up again and began to moan around his feet and to sting his face with icy shot; and as he trudged across the desolate path which led to Manning's

lonely house he discovered that Rude Boreas could be as keen a sharpshooter as any in the rifle-pits around Richmond. A hard walk up-hill for a quarter of an hour brought him to the brow of the cliff on which stood the forlorn and wind-swept house where John Manning lay. An unkempt and hideous old crone as black as night opened the door for him. He left in the hall his hat and overcoat and a little square box he had brought in his hand ; and then he followed the ebony hag up-stairs to Colonel Manning's room. Here at the door she left him, after giving a sharp knock. A weak voice said, "Come in!"

Laurence Laughton entered the room with a quick step, but the light-hearted words with which he had meant to encourage his friend died on his lips as soon as he saw how grievously that friend had changed. John Manning had faded to a shadow of his former self ; the light of his eye was quenched, and the spirit within him seemed broken; the fine, sensitive, noble face lay white against the pillow, looking weary and wan and hopeless. The effort to greet his friend exhausted him and brought on a hard cough, and he pressed his hand to his breast as though some hidden malady were gnawing and burning within.

"Well, John," said Larry, as he took a seat by the bedside, "why didn't you let me know before now that you were laid up? I could have got away a month ago."

"Time enough yet," said John Manning slowly ;

"time enough yet. I shall not die for another week, I fear."

"Why, man, you must not talk like that. You are as good as a dozen dead men yet," said Larry, trying to look as cheerful as might be.

"I am as good as dead myself," said the sick man seriously, as befitted a man under the shadow of death; "and I have no wish to live. The sonner I am out of this pain and powerlessness the better I shall like it."

"I say, John, old man, this is no way for you to talk. Brace up, and you will soon be another man!"

"I shall soon be in another world, I hope," and the helpless misery of the tone in which these few words were said smote Laurence Laughton to the heart.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked with as lively an air as he could attain, for the ominous and inexplicable sadness of the situation was fast taking hold on him.

"I have a bullet through the lungs and a pain in the heart."

"But men do not die of a bullet in the lungs and a pain in the heart," was Larry's encouraging response.

"I shall."

"Why should you more than others?"

"Because there is something else—something mysterious, some unknown malady—which bears me down and burns me up. There is no use try-

ing to deceive me, Larry. My papers are made out, and I shall get my discharge from the Army of the Living in a very few days now. But I must not waste the little breath I have left in talking about myself. I sent for you to ask a favor."

Larry held out his hand, and John Manning took it and seemed to gain strength from the firm clasp.

"I knew I could rely on you," he said, "for much or for little. And this is not much, for I have not much to leave. This worn old house, which belonged to my grandmother, and in which I spent the happiest hours of my boyhood, this and a few shares of stock here and there, are all I have to leave. I do not know what the house is worth —and I shall be glad when I am gone from it. If I had not come here, I think I might perhaps have got well. There seems to be something deadly about the place." The sick man's voice sank to a wavering whisper, as though borne down by a sudden weight of impending danger against which he might struggle in vain; he gave a fearful glance about the room as though seeking a mystic foe, hidden and unknown. "The very first day we were here the cat lapped its milk by the fire and then stretched itself out and died without a sign. And I had not been here two days before I felt the fatal influence: the trouble from my wound came on again, and this awful burning in my breast began to torture me. As a boy, I thought that heaven must be like this house; and now I should not want to die if I thought hell could be worse!"

"Why don't you leave the place, since you hate it so?" asked Larry, with what scant cheeriness he could muster; he was yielding himself slowly to the place, though he fought bravely against his superstitious weakness.

"Am I fit to be moved?" was the sick man's query in reply.

"But you will be better soon, and then—"

"I shall be worse before I am better, and I shall never be better in this life or in this place. No, no, I must die in my hole like a dog. Like a dog!" and John Manning repeated the words with a wistful face. "Do you remember the faithful beast who always welcomed me here when we came up before we went to Europe?"

"Of course I do," said Larry, glad to get the sick man away from his sickness, and to ease his mind by talk on a healthy topic; "he was a splendid fellow, too. Cesar, that was his name, wasn't it?"

"Cesar Borgia I called him," was Manning's sad reply. "I knew you could not have forgotten him. He is dead. Cesar Borgia is dead. He was the last living thing that loved me—except you, Larry, I know—and he is dead. He died this morning. He came to my bedside as usual, and he licked my hand gently and looked up in my face and laid him down alongside of me on the carpet here and died. Poor Cesar Borgia—he loved me, and he is dead! And you, Larry, you must not stay here. The air is fatal. Every

breath may be your last. When you have heard what I want, you must be off at once. If you like, you may come up again to the funeral before your leave is up. I saw you had three weeks."

Laurence Laughton moved uneasily in his chair and swallowed with difficulty. "John," he managed to say after an effort, "if you talk to me like that, I shall go at once. Tell me what it is you want me to do for you."

"I want you to take care of my wife and of my child, if there be one born to me after my death."

"Your wife?" repeated Larry, in staring surprise.

"You did not know I was married? I knew it at the time, as the boy said," and John Manning smiled bitterly.

"Where is she?" was Larry's second query.

"Here."

"Here?"

"In this house. You shall see her before you go. And after the funeral I want you to get her away from here with what speed you can. Sell this house for what it will bring, and put the money into government bonds. You may find it hard to persuade her to move, for she seems to have a strange liking for this place. She breathes freely in the deadly air that suffocates me. But you must not let her remain here; this is no place for her now that a new life and new duties are before her."

"How was it I did not know of your marriage?" asked Larry.

"I knew nothing about it myself twenty-four hours before it happened," answered John Manning. "You need not look surprised. It is a simple story. I had this shot through the breast at Gettysburg last Fourth of July. I lay on the hillside a day and a night before relief came. Then a farmer took me into his house. A military surgeon dressed my wounds, but I owed my life to the nursing and care and unceasing attention of a young lady who was staying with the farmer's daughter. She had been doing her duty as a nurse as near to the field as she could go ever since the first Bull Run. She saved my life, and I gave it to her—what there was of it. She was a beautiful woman, indeed I never saw a more beautiful—and she has a strange likeness to—but that you shall see for yourself when you see her. She is getting a little rest now, for she has been up all night attending to me. She *will* wait on me in spite of all I say; of course I know there is no use wasting effort on me now. She is the most devoted nurse in the world; and we shall part as we met—she taking care of me at the last as she did at the first. Would God our relation had never been other than patient and nurse! It would have been better for both had we never been husband and wife!" And John Manning turned his face to the wall with a weary sigh; then he coughed harshly and raised his hand to his breast as though to stifle the burning within him.

"It seems to me, John, that you ought not to

talk like that of the woman you loved," said Laurence Laughton, with unusual seriousness.

"I never loved her," answered Manning, coldly. Then he turned and asked hastily, "Do you think I should want to die, if I loved her?"

"But she loves you," said Laurence.

"She never loved me!" was Manning's impatient retort.

"Then why were you married?"

"That's what I would like to know. It was fate, I suppose. What is to be, is. I never used to believe in predestination, but I know that of my own free will I could never have done what I did."

"I confess I do not understand you," said Larry.

"I do not understand myself. There is so much in this world that is mysterious—I hope the next will be different. I was under the charm, I fancy, when I married her. She is a beautiful woman, as I told you, and I was a man, and I was weak, and I had hope. Why she married me that early September evening, I do not know. It was not long before we both found out our mistake. And it was too late then. We were man and wife. Don't suppose I blame her—I do not. I have no cause of complaint. She is a good wife to me, as I have tried to be a good husband to her. We made a mistake in marrying each other, and we know it—that's all!"

Before Laurence Laughton could answer, the

door opened gently and Mrs. Manning entered the room. Laurence rose to greet his friend's wife, but the act was none the less a homage to her resplendent beauty. In spite of the worn look of her face, she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. She had tawny tigress hair and hungry tigress eyes. The eyes indeed were fathomless and indescribable, and their fitful glance had something uncanny about it. The hair was nearly of the true Venetian color, and she had the true Venetian sumptuousness of appearance, simple as was her attire. She seemed as though she had just risen from the couch whereon she reclined before Titian or Tintoretto, and, having clothed herself, had walked forth in this nineteenth century and these United States. She was a strange and striking figure, and Laurence found it impossible to analyze exactly the curious and weird impression she produced on him. Her voice, as she greeted him, gave him a peculiar thrill; and when he shook hands with her he seemed to feel himself face to face with some strange being from another land and another century. She inspired him with a supernatural awe he was not wont to feel in the presence of woman. He had a dim consciousness that there lingered in his memory the glimmering image of some woman seen somewhere, he knew not when, who was like unto the woman before him.

As she took her seat by the side of the bed, she gave Laurence Laughton a look that seemed to peer

into his soul. Laurence felt himself quiver under it. It was a look to make a man fearful. Then John Manning, who had moved uneasily as his wife entered, said, "Laurence, can you see any resemblance in my wife to any one you ever saw before?"

Their eyes met again, and again Laurence had a vague remembrance as though he and she had stood face to face before in some earlier existence. Then his wandering recollections took shape, and he remembered the face and the form and the haunting mystery of the expression, and he felt for a moment as though he had been permitted to peer into the cabalistic darkness of an awful mystery, though he failed wholly to perceive its occult significance—if significance there were of any sort.

"I think I do remember," he said at last. "It was in Venice—at the church of Santa Maria Madalena—the picture there that—"

"You remember aright!" interrupted John Manning. "My wife is the living image of the Venetian woman for whose beauty Marco Manin was one day stabbed in the back with a glass stiletto and Giovanni Manin fled from the place of his birth and never saw it again. It is idle to fight against the stars in their courses. We met here in the New World, she and I, as they met in the Old World so long ago—and the end is the same. It was to be . . . it was to be!"

Laurence Laughton gave a swift glance at his friend's wife to see what effect these words might

have on her, and he was startled to detect on her face the same enigmatic smile which was the chief memory he had retained of the Venetian picture. Truly, the likeness between the painting and the wife of his friend was marvellous; and Laurence tried to shake off a morbid wonder whether there might be any obscure and inscrutable survival from one generation to another across the seas and across the years.

"If you remember the picture," said John Manning, "perhaps you remember the quaint goblet of Venetian glass I bought the same day?"

"Of course I do," said Larry, glad to get Manning started on a topic of talk a little less personal.

"Perhaps you know what has become of it?" asked Manning.

"I can answer 'of course' to that, too," replied Larry, "because I have it here."

"Here?"

"Here—in a little square box, in the hall," answered Larry. "I had it in my trunk, you know, when we took passage on the *Vanderbilt* at Havre that May morning. I forgot to give it to you in the hurry of landing, and I haven't had a chance since. This is the first time I have seen you for nearly three years. I found the box this morning, and I thought you might like to have it again, so I brought it up."

John Manning rang the bell at the head of his bed. The black crone answered it, and soon returned with the little square box. Manning im-

patiently broke the seals and cords that bound its cover and began eagerly to release the goblet from the cotton and tissue paper in which it had been carefully swathed and bandaged. Mrs. Manning, though her moods were subtler and more intense, showed an anxiety to see the goblet quite as feverish as her husband's. In a minute the last wrapping was twisted off and the full beauty of the Venetian glass was revealed to them. Assuredly no praise was too loud for its delicate and exquisite workmanship.

"Does Mrs. Manning know the story of the goblet?" asked Larry; "has she been told of the peculiar virtue ascribed to it?"

"She has too great a fondness for the horrible and the fantastic not to have heard the story in its smallest details," said Manning.

Mrs. Manning had taken the glass in her fine, thin hands. Evidently it and its mystic legend had a morbid fascination for her. A strange light gleamed in her wondrous eyes, and Laughton was startled again to see the extraordinary resemblance between her and the picture they had looked at on the day the goblet had been bought.

"When the poison was poured into it," she said at last, with quick and restless glances at the two men, "the glass broke—then the tale was true?"

"It was a coincidence only, I'm afraid," said her husband, who had rallied and regained strength under the unwonted excitement.

Just then the old-fashioned clock on the stairs

struck five. Mrs. Manning started up, holding the goblet in her hand.

"It is time for your medicine," she said.

"As you please," answered her husband wearily, sinking back on his pillow. "My wife insists on giving me every drop of my potions with her own hands. I shall not trouble her much longer, and I doubt if it is any use for her to trouble me now."

"I shall give you everything in this glass after this," she said.

"In the Venetian glass?" asked Larry.

"Yes," she said, turning on him fiercely; "why not?"

"Do you think the doctor is trying to poison me?" asked her husband.

"No, I do not think the doctor is trying to poison you," she repeated mechanically as she moved toward a little sideboard in a corner of the room. "But I shall give you all your medicines in this hereafter."

She stood at the little sideboard, with her back toward them, and she mingled the contents of various phials in the Venetian goblet. Then she turned to cross the room to her husband. As she walked with the glass in her hand there was a rift in the clouds high over the other side of the river, and the rays of the setting sun thrust themselves through the window and lighted up the glory of her hair and showed the strange gleam in her staring eyes. Another step, and the red rays fell on the Venetian glass, and it burned and

glowed, and the green serpents twined about its ruby stem seemed to twist and crawl with malignant life, while their scorching eyes shot fire. Another step, and she stood by the bedside. As John Manning reached out his hand for the goblet, a tremor passed through her, her fingers clinched the fragile stem, and the glass fell on the floor and was shattered to shivers as its fellow had been shattered three centuries ago and more. She still stared steadily before her; then her lips parted, and she said, "The glass broke—the glass broke—then the tale is true!" And with one hysteric shriek she fell forward amid the fragments of the Venetian goblet, unconscious thereafter of all things.